

VOICES *from* BEYOND

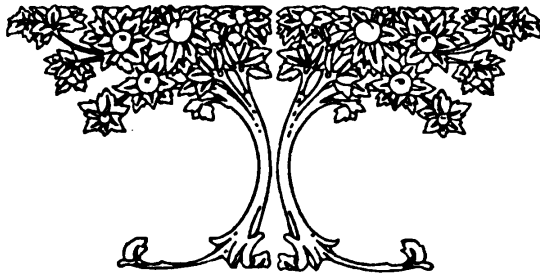
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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

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DEDICATED
TO
GEORGE ALAN HARDWICKE
To whom life was, and is, a joyous adventure.

*Gift
Mrs. H. H. Higbie
12-22-53*

FOREWORD

VOICES FROM BEYOND is an attempt on the part of its author to put into readable form certain well-authenticated facts concerning psychical phenomena. For many years scientific research has been carried on in this field by men whose personal integrity it is impossible to question. The great mass of people, however, know nothing about the results of all this labor and tend still to associate psychic manifestations and spiritual phenomena with fraud and charlatanry. VOICES FROM BEYOND is an attempt to dispel this illusion.

The first four chapters of the book contain the story of Bob Burton's personal experience, and describe his attempt to convince his friend that his reasons for believing in psychical research are valid. The rest of the book is a presentation of evidence in support of the author's thesis: namely, that communication with the spirits of the departed is not only possible but demonstrable.

There are three characters in the narrative section of the book: Ned Huntington, Bob and Ethel Burton. All three are in the forties, intelligent, well read, cultivated. Ned is the type of man who has to be shown, but he enters good naturedly into the spirit of the argument upon which his friend, Bob, embarks to convince him. Ethel, who has shared her husband's experiences and assisted him in his investigations, is a party to the discussion and makes an occasional pertinent comment as the subject advances.

Dr. Colin Noel who enters the dialogue in the fourth chapter is, like Huntington, inclined to be skeptical. His penetrating questions and sharp criticisms force Bob Burton into a precise statement of facts.

It remains only to be said that the experience described in the narrative is an actual experience and that the references made to experiments are all taken from trustworthy sources.

CHAPTER I

“**I**T sounds like the purest bunk.”

Huntington lolled in his chair before the fire which sent its crackling cheer into the room, causing the tall shadows of the clustered groups to dance in grotesque shapes upon the panelled wall and high ceiling of the club smoking room.

“Well, it may be bunk, Ned,” agreed Burton, “but you are speaking as I once spoke. Life is full and well-rounded for you. You have your wife and family. It’s a bit different when one of your own has gone into the Unknown. Especially, one whose future held great promise. Somehow it makes you think.” The gray-haired man leaned forward, cupping his chin in his hands, an elbow on either knee.

“I don’t want to hurt your feelings,” continued Ned Huntington, “my point is that you get mixed up in this business only when you’re in a more or less morbid state of mind. If our friends who have died can talk to us, why don’t they speak directly, and not in a back alley through some questionable character whom they never knew? I may be in the foolish forties, but I am not foolish enough to accept this sort of thing. The whole business sounds as though it might be the result of an adolescent superstition.”

He threw his leg over the chair arm, and swung it back and forth as if to give relief to his irritation. To think of sane old Bob Burton, a professional man of no mean attainment, getting mixed up with spirit voices, table tipping and all the other rot that goes with it. Why the papers were forever exposing these traffickers upon the credulity of the weak-minded and those made morbid by grief.

“You speak as though you’ve had a lot of experience in this. Have you ever attended a seance or witnessed any-

thing upon which to base an opinion?" Bob's voice was even and low. His eyes were fixed on the fire.

"Of course not," retorted the other querulously. "Do you think I'm crazy? I don't want to be the laughing stock of all my friends. Take it from me, you'd better snap out of it too. The boys around the club are beginning to tap their foreheads whenever your name is mentioned." He paused and strummed the chair arm with nervous fingers. "Don't you understand? You've got to get out of this nonsense before it has gone too far."

"I've known you a good many years," replied Burton quietly, "and always when you expressed an opinion it has been worth hearing, because it has been the result of personal knowledge and experience. This is the first time that you have expressed a positive conviction admittedly based upon prejudice. Why should your attitude toward psychics be different from your attitude toward any other line of scientific investigation?"

Huntington fastened his eyes on the profile of his friend.

"Tell me," he said gravely, "have you ever seen anything worth while come out of this spirit stuff? Doesn't the whole thing have to be done in the dark because it won't bear the light of day? I've taken the jokes of the crowd and stood by you faithfully, but it irritates me to see a man with your intelligence and your standing jeopardizing your future as you seem to be doing. Look here, have you any real reason for this seeming insanity?"

The taut lines about Burton's mouth relaxed. His grey eyes twinkled. "If you really care to know, I shall be glad to tell you where you can find the same things that have interested me, and how I became interested.

"Understand now, I can sympathize with your feelings in this matter, for only a few years ago I, too, was a confirmed skeptic. But before I attempt to present this 'proof,' as you call it, I should like to make one request—that you give

me a fair hearing and take the trouble to verify the statements I make."

"You sound as though it might take the rest of the night," smiled Huntington. "All I asked for was one bit of evidence which any rational person could accept."

The older man sank back into the depths of his chair.

"It is because I know you for the man you are that the request is made," retorted Burton, grimly. "I should not expect one of your intelligence to accept any unsupported statements of mine. For that reason I'm asking you to verify them. Unless you do that, there is no possible point in beginning. For in the end you'd only be convinced of what you now fear—that I, your friend, have become subject to mental decay."

"Yes, I grant that point—but personally I'm not much interested in spending time on a subject of this sort. However, in order to be fair I'll agree to verify any point which, in my opinion, is worthy of verification. How's that?"

"Fair enough," returned the other. "Get your pencil and a piece of paper. From time to time, I shall ask you to jot down a few names, addresses and perhaps the title of a book or two."

Burton lit a cigar and blew a few smoke rings toward the ceiling, as if attempting to marshal his ideas before beginning his story. He realized that his own impressions would have little weight—that he must have definite facts if he were to convince Huntington.

"As you remember," he began, "about six years ago one very dear to me was sentenced to death. Cancer! Four months at the most was the verdict of the medical profession. Nothing unusual or new in that situation, of course. Hundreds are facing it daily.

"You knew him—nothing very fanciful about his mentality—rather a keen mind though—one who might be

termed a free thinker. He was not bound by religious dogmas, to any great extent.

“Well, there was the fact and we all faced it. He knew it was only a matter of weeks, and also knew that we knew it.

“‘No morphine,’ he ordered, ‘until the time that my brain ceases to function normally. While I live I wish to think clearly.’ This was his decision in the face of terrific pain.

“About a week before death claimed him, he sent for me—to come with all possible speed.

“‘Am I delirious—tell me?’ That was the question with which I was greeted on arrival at his bedside.

“After asking him about his symptoms and talking of other matters—some ten or fifteen minutes of conversation—I said, ‘What made you think you were delirious?’

“‘Don’t you think I am? Are you sure that I’m normal mentally?’ he asked.

“‘Quite sure, but why ask?’

“‘Well, if you’re quite sure, then a most extraordinary thing has happened,’ he paused for a moment and then continued, ‘My mother, brother and a close friend, all of whom I know to be dead, have been here and talked with me. Evidently we have this business of death all wrong. They have been telling me about it, and it doesn’t seem possible. Are you sure that I’m not delirious?’

“‘You do not seem to be,’ I replied, ‘but to make sure, we’ll have your doctor up.’

“The doctor, after hearing my suspicions, talked with him for fully twenty minutes, and on returning to the room where I had waited, expressed the opinion that he was perfectly normal mentally, but weakening rapidly.

“Said he, ‘It’s only a matter of days now.’

"I returned to the bedside of the sufferer. He seemed dozing, but made known the fact that he was conscious of my presence by reaching for my hand. Thus we remained for a short time—I sitting on the side of his bed and he apparently asleep.

" 'If I were a younger man,' he whispered weakly, without opening his eyes, 'I'd look into this business of the Unknown. It's strange—but I've the impression that we die and yet we do not die—strange—now my mother's coming.' He stopped.

"Naturally, I was impressed. I think I had some vague idea of humoring him when I said, 'If you get over there, or wherever it is, and find you're alive, try to let us know. Will you?'

" 'All right,' he said, and then proceeded to ask questions about various other things in which he was interested.

"The fatal day arrived and my dear friend died. The funeral had been over about five weeks. In the stress of every day duties and the settling of his affairs our conversation regarding communication had slipped my mind. Then one night, a little past twelve o'clock, the front doorbell suddenly rang. It rang furiously and continued to do so. We hastened to the door, but upon opening it found no one there. Strangely, however, the bell rang on for perhaps five or ten seconds, and then stopped.

"Examination of the push button showed that it was in perfect order. Thinking a crossed wire might have caused the disturbance, we called an electrician in the morning and had him go over the entire circuit from push button to dry cells and back again. He reported everything in order. After a certain amount of speculation concerning the incident the subject was dropped.

"Perhaps a week passed after the doorbell incident. Then one night a guest, our departed friend's wife, was awakened suddenly by hearing her name called. She not only insisted that she heard the call again after she had

awakened, but she was positive that it was the voice of her husband.

“Discussion naturally followed this occurrence, and the request and promise regarding communication was recalled. As to the voice, we concluded that it was an hallucination.

“Nevertheless, everyone agreed that we would feel better if my end of the agreement concerning communication were carried out. So I went forth to unearth a medium—only to find them just about as scarce as the proverbial hen’s teeth.”

Burton paused and contemplated his cigar.

“Strange how things work out, isn’t it? It was a former skeptic like yourself who gave me the advice and help I was seeking, a young lawyer, who decided, some twenty-five years ago, to expose all so-called mediums and spiritists in Buffalo, N. Y.

“He planned a campaign to save his fellow citizens from the illusion of survival by removing all persons found guilty of asserting there was such a thing—all persons, that is, who were declaring that they had tangible evidence of survival.

“At the very time this young man made his decision, one could stand on the top of any high building in the city and count hundreds of church spires piercing the sky, each a silent symbol of man’s hope of immortality. He did not select the organizations behind these symbols as proper subjects for his attack. No indeed, for these were ancient, established and of the accepted tradition—holding forth the promise of immortality within conventional limits.

“But this young lawyer chose to help expose the scattered few who were defying accepted tradition. He started, as many a man before him had started, to expose—but he ended a convert of the very cause he had condemned. Coming to scoff he remained to study and learn.

"On the advice of a friend, I decided to get in touch with this gentleman and I finally 'phoned for an appointment. It was granted at once.

"I shall never forget the impressions I gained as he rose from his desk and advanced to greet me. How was I to present such a subject to this elderly, well-groomed, and obviously intelligent gentleman?

"It was my voice that answered his greeting, but it was not until I was seated that my mind began to function. Then he asked 'What can I do for you, Mr. Burton?'

"Feeling very ill at ease I came to the point at once. 'I have heard that you know something about mediums and could possibly direct me to one upon whom I can rely.'

" 'Just why do you wish to see a medium?'

"That forced the issue, and the whole experience you have just heard, was related, with an occasional interruption on his part. I tried as best I could to appear casual about the whole affair which at the time, remember, seemed to me painfully absurd.

" 'Have you any idea that your effort to communicate with this person will be successful?' he questioned.

"That settled it. All hope of avoiding the issue was gone. 'No, I have not,' came my forced answer.

" 'Then it would surprise you to be assured that you can hear his voice and talk with him just as I am talking with you?'

" 'It most certainly would,' I admitted quickly, 'and I confess it seems quite impossible.'

"He smiled and allowed his gaze to travel over the roofs of the adjoining buildings, toward the western sky.

"It had been overcast all day, with now and then a heavy squall of rain. As I looked out, however, the sun was

breaking through banks of clouds, sending long streamers of silver light down toward the surface of Lake Erie. Suddenly the fields and woods along the Canadian shore were flooded with bright light. The lake itself and the city around us remained in shadow.

“‘Do you see that?’ he asked whimsically, extending his hand toward the window.

“‘It is beautiful, isn’t it? How fortunate you are in having such a splendid view from your office.’

“‘That is like life.’ He went on, apparently ignoring my remark. ‘We wander in the shadow. See how the darkness of these buildings seems to separate us from the light over there? That’s it—we are groping over the roughness of the barriers toward light, contentment and understanding, which creates peace of soul. That bright spot over there is like the place where your loved one now is.’ Then he swung about with a suddenness that startled me. ‘Were your wife to call you on this telephone, would you be surprised to hear her voice?’

“‘Certainly not.’

“‘That,’ he exclaimed, ‘is due to the fact that a man named Bell was able to perfect this same telephone for the use of man, in spite of ridicule, opposition and prejudice. And with man’s acceptance of it, what progress has resulted! It is a step toward elimination of time and space.’

“‘In order to attract your attention, or mine, it would be necessary for her to ring the phone bell here, and even after she had had your attention she would still require your cooperation. It would be necessary for you to lift the receiver and signify your presence at this end of the line and your readiness to communicate with her.’

“‘But to get to this business of yours: the nearest medium who has been tried and proven, is a Mrs. Burling of Detroit. It will give me pleasure to secure an appointment for you. I’ll not mention either your name or the reason for your visit.’

"I told him that I felt it to be rather an imposition and asked why I couldn't go to Detroit and take my chance on seeing her.

"He explained that a group of her friends in Detroit sat with her solely for the benefit of themselves, and as a result, her time was not entirely her own. Outsiders, it seemed, were not welcome unless recommended.

" 'Perhaps you have thought me over positive in some of my statements to you,' said he with a quizzical twinkle. 'The things which seem wildly improbable from your point of view are to me facts, proven to my satisfaction by twenty years of study. You may understand better when you return from Detroit.'

"As I rose to go, he told me that he would telephone when an appointment had been arranged. Then, as an after-thought he added, 'There is just one request which I have to make. Before you pronounce final judgment upon the phenomena which you may witness—remember that scores of fine minds have devoted whole lifetimes to the study of this subject. Many of these men have felt that their results merely indicate the path for more competent students to follow.'

CHAPTER II

“**T**WO days later my friend in Buffalo phoned me. His voice was crisp and business-like.

“‘I have arranged an appointment for you with Mrs. Burling, 10 o'clock in the morning, day after tomorrow, and I advise that you take the boat from here tomorrow night for the trip is most delightful.’

“It struck me that he was taking a great deal for granted, and seemed to be overlooking the fact that there were more important things in a man's life than seeing an unknown woman in Detroit. I had rather anticipated being given an opportunity to select a time which would meet my convenience. My impression had been that these people did mediumistic work as a means of livelihood and were open for business any time. Therefore, I protested slightly over such short notice.

“He assured me that it was rather unusual to be able to arrange an appointment and, should I fail to take advantage of this one it might be some weeks or even months before another opportunity would present itself.

“The fact that he had taken the trouble to make the arrangements, backed to no little extent by my curiosity, prompted me to co-operate. I thanked him and assured him that I would call to discuss the results of my visit after my return.

“My wife and I made the trip to Detroit. Upon arriving we went at once to the address which the lawyer had given us, where a member of the Detroit group greeted us and drove us to the house where Mrs. Burling was stopping. She was engaged at the time of our arrival, and while waiting we attempted to gain some information from our host. I immediately took it upon myself to explain that neither

Ethel, my wife, nor I had ever attended a seance nor had a psychic experience.

"He told us of his personal experiences with various mediums and of conversations with a number of his departed friends and relatives.

" 'Do you mean to say that you can talk to your departed friends whenever you wish?' I asked.

" 'No indeed,' he replied, 'sometimes we get nothing. We really know very little about the forces at work. But, as is true of your radio, there are times when conditions are favorable and the reception remarkable.'

" 'Then we may not get anything after our trip down here?' asked my wife.

" 'I certainly hope you do—but there can be no promises made in this work. It seems to depend on so many and such varied factors. You are both new at this, so possibly a word of warning is worth while. The mental attitude has a great deal to do with the results obtained. Try to reserve criticism until after the seance.'

" 'We will do anything you suggest, for we should certainly be disappointed if nothing happened,' said I.

" 'Would you like to have me go in with you? It might make it easier.'

" 'Indeed we would, if you can spare the time to do it.'

"The answer was an expression of relief, for neither of us felt quite as light-hearted about the experience as the time approached.

"A slim, dark-eyed woman of about thirty-five entered. Our host greeted her as Mrs. Burling, introducing us simply as friends from out of the city.

"A small room opening off the reception hall of a simply furnished dwelling was used for seance work, and we were invited to examine it. The one window was covered by a

dark curtain to exclude the light. That and the door by which we entered were the only openings. A victrola stood next to the door and beside it a straight backed chair. The other furnishings consisted of three more chairs and a sofa placed under the window. I noticed that the medium wore a dark dress of a material that rustled when she moved.

“‘This is the trumpet,’ said Mrs. Burling, holding up a very light tin tube, shaped somewhat like a cornucopia, about three feet in length. ‘It enables them to be heard more easily for it increases the volume of sound.’

“After our examination of this device it was placed in the center of the room directly in front of the medium. The smallness of the room, excluding the space occupied by the sofa and chairs, left only a scant four feet of open floor after we were seated. Holding hands in so small a circle we had rather complete control and could note instantly the slightest movement on the part of any sitter.

“The light was turned off and the victrola music started. Our host described the procedure for our information, saying that Mrs. Burling’s guide would come through and open the seance; then, if he could possibly do so, he would bring through our friends, should they care to talk. ‘You know,’ he added, ‘we are told that a great many people who have passed on are still so prejudiced that they refuse to communicate, even when offered an opportunity.’

“This remark I suspected of being an alibi.

“He then related several experiences of his, bearing out this statement.

“While this conversation was in progress I attempted to get my bearings and to fix in my mind the relative positions of the different members of the group. I also noted the timbre and characteristics of the medium’s voice. Where the curtain was hung over the window I observed a narrow strip of light running the full length of the case-ment.

"We had talked perhaps five minutes and the victrola had been rewound, when I mildly protested about the continuous music, as it prevented concentration upon any sound that might come from the direction of the medium.

"The explanation given was that music and general conversation helped to relax the individuals in the group. Most people, it seems, have a tendency to become tense; to concentrate their energy on listening, or to assume a state of mental expectancy. So we continued with conversation, story telling, singing, to free the group from this state of mind and create the right sort of atmosphere.

"Mrs. Burling related several instances where the mental state of the sitters had made it impossible for their departed friends to get through to them.

"Then things began to happen, three loud snaps coming from the general direction of the trumpet.

"Mrs. Burling asked if it was her guide. The question went unanswered. There was a movement which caught my attention. It was like the passing of a shadow across the crack of light, by the side of the window, at my right. This was directly behind and a little above my wife who was sitting at the opposite side of the room from the medium. I was amazed to see that the trumpet was passing slowly across it.

"Mrs. Burling from her place across the room remarked, 'I believe the trumpet is in the air.'

"I watched, fascinated, while it passed slowly back across the strip of light so that it gradually became entirely visible from one end to the other. This occurrence gave me food for thought. There were the three other sitters definitely accounted for, and here was a metal trumpet moving, as a dirigible might, right before my eyes. None of the others were in a position to see as I had and during the whole time they had continued their conversation.

"Then came the climax. Because I had been with my deceased friend up to and including the moment of his passing,

it was to be expected that the timbre and quality of his voice were familiar to me. Due to a protrusion of his upper teeth, there were certain words to which he had always given a slight lisping sound. This characteristic had been especially pronounced just prior to death, when weakness forced him to speak one word at a time. Picture my astonishment, therefore, when there appeared directly in front of me a luminous cloud, from the depths of which came, in this familiar, lisping voice, the question, 'Bob, is it possible you can hear me?'

"I was too overcome to answer. But Ethel did so at once. 'Yes, indeed we can hear you.'

"The voice continued: 'That is most remarkable. But then, it is all so remarkable that one should cease to be surprised.'

"By this time I had gathered my startled wits and proceeded to ask a question which no person on earth, or out of it, could answer except the man whom that voice represented. The answer came,—unhaltingly yet with the characteristic lisp. Then, quite abruptly his voice stopped.

"The medium spoke: 'From the way he talks this must be the first time this particular spirit has ever communicated. Perhaps he will come back later. Do you recognize him?'

"While Ethel was acknowledging the question my thoughts were racing on. Here was I, in a strange room, in a strange city, among strangers. I had just spoken with one who, according to all accepted beliefs with which I was familiar, was no longer able to speak. Hypnotism, auto-suggestion, hallucination? Quickly I ran over all these in my mind, only to discard them at once. Ventriloquism? No, even if it were possible to perform it in the dark—which it is not—this explanation would have to be eliminated, for the detail of the voice, enunciation, personal characteristics, were too perfect to make such an hypothesis possible.

"My name was called in a muffled whisper from in front of me.

"I answered and asked, 'Who is it?'

"The answer which came was from a cousin of mine who had been dead for approximately fifteen years, a young woman who had not been in my thoughts for many years. After giving her name she answered questions regarding various incidents, members of the family, and so forth, with ease and accuracy.

"Possibly five minutes had elapsed before she remarked, 'Your friend is ready to talk again. He has to be shown how, and is not strong enough to speak at length. What a surprise the transition experience was to him, and how anxious he has been to tell you all about it! Good-bye.' The trumpet fell to the floor with a clatter.

"Several others talked,—three friends of ours, some friends of our host. One had a particularly loud, full voice and when I remarked upon this fact, it was explained that this individual had been talking with them at least once a week for nearly three years. Our friends who had just spoken were doing so for the first time.

"The one whom we had most hoped to hear from spoke again terminating the seance.

" 'I rang the doorbell to attract your attention, to remind you of our agreement. I want you to keep on with this, so that I may tell you as I learn.' These were his parting words. His speech, though short, started me on a line of investigation and research which has not only proven enormously instructive, but has provided a great deal of real enjoyment as well.

" 'There, Ned old chap, you have the story of the beginning of my insanity, as you have termed it.'

Bob threw his cigar into the fire, glanced at his watch, and rose from the chair.

“ ‘It was my impression that you were to give me some proof which would be convincing. All you have done so far is to tell of a personal experience, the reality and genuineness of which is wholly dependent upon your unsupported statements. Moreover, the events you narrate occurred at a time and under conditions which, you will have to admit, are open to question. Where is the proof of the reality of any of this? I am inclined to credit it, knowing you, but Bob old man, no one else would.’ Ned’s face wore a kindly smile as he finished speaking.

“ ‘Sorry, but I am late for an engagement. I will continue to build up my case some other time,—that is, if you care to have me.’ Bob returned his watch to his pocket, extending his hand to bid his skeptical friend good-night.

“ ‘Let’s dine together tomorrow night,’ Ned suggested as they walked toward the checkroom. ‘How would seven suit you?’

“ ‘If you wish to continue this subject come out to the house for dinner, so that you can question Ethel, my accomplice in this crime. Better not depend on my statements alone. Will you come?’

‘Glad to. What time?’

“ ‘Six-thirty, and good-night.’

CHAPTER III

DRIVING home that night Burton re-enacted in retrospect his visit to Detroit.

A given sensation, once enjoyed, may be made to reappear, in some cases faded perhaps, but none the less recognizable. At other times the recalled impressions are most vivid. The mechanism which produces them is the one which conserves them. No idea can possibly be evoked without bringing in its train of association a variegated collection of recollections, of tendencies and of actions.

The hidden domain in the mind of Burton, where the mental pictures and ideas of past experiences lay buried, was tapped by the stimulus of his conversation with Huntington. Memory flashed pictures before his conscious mind with a clearness and force which made the past appear vividly in the present.

Again he and Ethel were leaving Buffalo in the evening, the change from sunset to night had been so measured that only gradually had they become aware of the ever increasing number of stars.

He recalled his wife's remark regarding them.

“ ‘They are there all the time,’ Ethel had said, indicating the stars. ‘They are visible to us only when the bright daylight goes and the darkness comes. The spirit world, too, may require darkness as the only means through which to manifest itself to human senses. We think nothing of the fact that the stars require darkness in order to become visible to us. Yet it bothers us to think that mediums require it to reveal spirit manifestations; we think of it then only as an opportunity for trickery.’ ”

As his mind had followed her reasoning, several things occurred to him which he had always known, but had never thought of in this connection.

"Well, my dear," he recalled replying, "the germ of us all had to be nurtured in the dark and all important functions of these bodies of ours operate in the darkness."

Her rejoinder flashed back to him from memory's chambers.

"Yes. I suppose one would think you quite crazy were you to ask a photographer to develop a picture in the light. It is an accepted fact that actinic rays would destroy the plate."

He smiled at the recollection. How many times since that memorable night had he seen demonstrations which the very fact of darkness transformed into veritable miracles. The occasion when, at his own request, he had been touched upon either eyeglass, accurately and lightly, regardless of the fact that he had changed position constantly. Later in that same experience he had endeavored to take hold of a levitated trumpet which touched head, shoulder, the back of the very hand with which he sought to capture it. All his efforts had brought a response of soft laughter, now on this side, now on that, then in front of him, then behind him. How little they had known then of what their trip would lead to.

"Well tomorrow," his wife had said, "we shall see what it is all about. It seems wild enough to suit the imagination of nearly anyone. Here we are, two apparently sane people, cancelling engagements, and turning things upside down in general, in order to keep an appointment with a woman we have never seen, and to talk with a man we know to be dead and buried. Still I have always believed in survival and who knows but that this may give objective proof of it."

He recalled her saying: "I have reasoned subjectively that the intelligence that directs and controls the heavenly

bodies, the intelligence behind the great constructive forces of the universe has something further in view than ultimate annihilation, destruction or decomposition and re-absorption into the earth. Look out through space. Think of the light years between us and the nearest of those stars. Try to visualize the size of this earth in comparison with all that. Surely souls go on to greater work where the influence of their personalities can be more widely felt than in this space here. I have always felt that this thing which we are going to investigate tomorrow is true—must be true—but I've never had the inclination to bother with cheap, uncertain mediums. My feeling has been that communication with those in the life beyond is something that we may develop as a reward for living constructively here and now."

Then he broke in; "Yet there are so many fakirs. These Indians who make a tree grow under your very nose which will bear fruit that you can pick, and so forth. We have all heard of this sort of thing and recognize that it must be a trick. The people who carry on the medium business do it for a living, and the temptation to put on a show must be very great at times."

"Because there are unprofessional doctors who take people's money without any intent to give value received, is no reason to believe that all men who have an M. D. after their names are cheats—is it? Every line of endeavor has its charlatans," Ethel had replied. "Perhaps we are too critical about this whole business—it would really mean such a lot to us were it true. We fear that disappointment will result so we set up all this criticism and question as a defense. We fear being taken in and then disillusioned."

"Man's desire for immortality may be due to his egotism, but I believe it is equally chargeable to his feeling that the time allotted to him in this life is too short for his full development, also to his demand for justice. Little wonder

that some ask the question: " 'Why be decent, or make an effort to live a constructive life, if this short existence is the whole story? The sinner and saint alike, the tramp and the man who really tries, each end in six feet of earth. It doesn't seem just. Why not simply go along and be comfortable, and then—shut the door, so to speak?' "

They had lapsed into silence. In memory he heard the soft lapping of the waves against the side of the boat mingled with the steady throb of the engines driving them through the night and the black water.

He mused: It was not so much that he wished immortality as that he could not see how it could be avoided. The law of compensation works here and it seems logical that it should continue to work. People who live with utter disregard for others surely must be given an opportunity to learn the joy of unselfish service. On the other hand, those who spend their whole earthly existence in sacrifice must somewhere be given a compensating opportunity. He believed in the law of compensation and it must reach out over more time than we are allowed here. The children he had seen pass on in early life—the young men hurled into oblivion during the World War—was nothing ahead of them? Adjustments must be made during life and life simply must continue on and on, with its process of trial and error until individual development is completed. It may not be a case of afterlife, he thought, but a case of continued life. We may pass from one phase of it into another.

Again recollection surged up, picturing a large hydroplane he had seen sweeping up the Detroit river. It had passed their boat as though the latter were stationary. There in that mechanism was a product of enquiring minds,—the steady pursuit of an idea in the face of ridicule and opposition. History may not repeat itself but it is replete with duplications in one respect, and that is

the uniform opposition on the part of the majority to new ideas of any sort or description. The steam engine, Fulton's steamboat, Wright's aeroplane, all have had their struggle against skepticism and unbelief. All were opposed as ideas of the devil and each had opponents who foresaw in these new ideas the possible destruction of the race. Opposition had delayed progress but never destroyed it.

He recalled how, late into the night on that return trip, he and Ethel had reviewed every detail of their astounding experience, how they had verified from their own knowledge of the persons speaking, the reality of the phenomena, how they had excluded mental telepathy on the grounds that although it might account for the substance of the messages, it could in no way account for the voice peculiarity that had been so pronounced to both. The parting words of their host were especially vivid: "Communicate your experience to other people," he had said, "that is the least any of us can do. The world needs to know. Such knowledge will alter its entire viewpoint." Memory pictured with vividness the home-coming and enthusiasm dampened by doubt and questioning on the part of relatives and friends alike, the pitying smiles, the humorous and sarcastic remarks—the whole picture flashed into his mind.

Ned's attitude was nothing new. Besides, there was no occasion for attempting to convince anyone. How well he had come to understand the dogmatic attitude of mind of the average individual. Evidence was being accumulated on every hand which people would not even take the trouble to read. No one accepted anything until he was ready for it, life seemed so vivid—and death so far removed.

He smiled at the recollection of the few, who in spite of prevailing skepticism and doubt, were determined to pursue these investigations. The last people in the world whom one would expect came to ask about the Detroit experience and to relate similar ones of their own; people

who, even now, were interested in receiving the latest information regarding new experiences."

What a stimulus it had been to find others who were interested and open-minded.

Well, when Ned Huntington came out on the morrow he would proceed with evidence which should impress him.

CHAPTER IV

THE meal was nearly over before the subject of the previous night's discussion was mentioned.

"Bob tells me you are interested in our experiences with psychical research. Doesn't it appeal to you as holding a great many possibilities which, once understood, may help us toward getting the most out of life, both here and hereafter?"

Ethel Burton's query was met by a quiet smile on the part of her guest.

"It's an interesting subject from many angles," declared Huntington. "But I must admit that what interests me most is the fact that apparently sane, substantial people should bother their heads about this sort of thing. Your faith in it seems to be an indication of the extremes to which people go when ruled by emotion rather than by reason."

He paused, then added: "As a child, I was entertained and delighted by fairy tales, and I am intrigued by the way in which this tale of Bob's appeals to my imagination. It's an old childhood association no doubt. So with this in mind I can honestly answer your question by saying that it is interesting, but wherein it can possibly be of help to anyone in getting anything out of life is beyond me."

"There is something refreshing about your frank skepticism, Ned," laughed Burton. "If I were expecting to make a trip, say to India, and knew it were only a matter of time before the trip must be made regardless of my wishes in the matter, a preliminary acquaintance with India would at least help to satisfy my curiosity. Its climate, conditions of life, types of people—it would be helpful to know about them, if I am going there some day to remain permanently."

"That is quite different," retorted Ned earnestly. "India is known to be a definite place, and to be inhabited by real people, with records of existence, from which you may obtain the information desired. There is nothing about it that is in direct opposition to natural law."

"The tales of the first explorers returning from India were no doubt met with doubt and ridicule," interposed Ethel.

Ned extended his hand on which rested the salad fork.

"Were I to withdraw the support of my hand from this fork it would fall to the table, being naturally subject to the law of gravity. On the other hand, were it to remain stationary in space without visible support, I should have every reason to feel that I were the victim of an illusion. My next move would be to place myself in the hands of a competent physician. Now, Bob here tells me that he saw a tin trumpet sail through the air unsupported and apparently in direct defiance of the law of gravity. My guess is that the law of gravity is sound—but Bob's eyesight is not." He smiled broadly at them both.

"And under the circumstances, a perfectly natural conclusion," asserted Burton heartily. "However, after we have retired to the other room and the cigars are lighted, it will be a great pleasure to show you some of the reasons why we believe that things can move without visible aid or support and still be subject to so-called natural laws."

"That sounds as though it held possibilities of real interest."

In the living room a fire burned brightly in the grate. Dinner over, Huntington and the Burtons settled themselves comfortably before the hearth.

Bob was the first to speak. "Suppose I were to let go of this cigar, and that instead of dropping to the floor it floated off into space—under certain conditions. To explain a phenomenon of this kind it will be necessary to review a

series of experiments made in Belfast during 1915-16 by W. J. Crawford, lecturer in mechanical engineering at the Municipal Technical Institute of that city, and also one of the lecturers at Queen's University, Belfast. It seems there resided in that city a family by the name of Goligher, all of whom were more or less mediumistic, having the ability to produce the substance called ectoplasm. This family was interested in spiritism and held a family circle every week at which various phases of phenomena in varying degrees were manifested. These consisted of trance speaking, automatic writing, table movements and so forth.

"A younger daughter by the name of Kathleen was soon discovered to be a medium of outstanding merit. Rumors of her powers reached Dr. Crawford. He found the entire Goligher family were willing to co-operate in any experiments he wished to make. He, as a result, spent nearly two years in scientific tests of the reality of psychic phenomena as demonstrated in that group.

"Several facts were established. First, that levitation in no way violates the law of gravity, as the lifting is accomplished by means of force lines or rods extending from the body of the medium to the object levitated. These rods are invisible to the eye but subject to demonstration as to their nature and method of operation."

Burton rose and crossing to a bookcase returned with a much worn copy of "The Reality of Psychic Phenomena" by W. J. Crawford. "Let me read you a description of the results obtained from one or two experiments made by this scientific investigator."

He was interrupted by Huntington's query: "And what do you consider scientific?"

Bob closed the book and paused for a moment before replying.

"The question of what is scientific and what is not has always been a source of controversy. Now when Leuwenhoek discovered, by means of a ground lens, that there were tiny animals living in the excretions of his salivary glands, he had enjoyed no scientific education. It is my impression that he cared for a public building for a livelihood, more or less as janitor—but his creations of ground glass and his observations led to the discovery of the microscope and the unfolding of a new universe of minute creatures, some the friends, others the enemies, of mankind. Today Leuwenhoek is referred to as scientific because of his discovery—but his science was due more to curiosity, observation and persistence, than to education.

"The measure of a true scientist seems to be his ability to study a given subject, not to prove or disprove it, but rather to whip his prejudices into submission and follow facts wherever they may lead. This is what Crawford did. It is what Crookes* and others before him did, and by following that line of procedure, in my opinion, they measured up to the requirements of a true scientist."

"Of course, the world of minute beings has in all probability existed since the beginning of time," put in Ethel, thoughtfully. "Man has simply been slow in discovering the fact. Just as the ability to make vibrations travel through space has been demonstrated and used by man only in recent years."

"You know, Ned, this radio here," Ethel Burton interjected, nodding her head toward the instrument, "is far more wonderful to me than many of the things we have met with in psychic work. When I realize that the music or the voice I hear is coming to me across miles of space—even

*Sir William Crookes, English Physicist, discoverer of metal thallium, invented radiometer, Crookes' vacuum tube. Born in London, 1832. A prominent exponent of psychic research.

across continents—it seems unbelievable. Yet there it is, and I use it without much question, knowing practically nothing regarding the laws which govern its operation.”

“To get back to Crawford,” Bob opened the book again, “as I said, many witnessed the table levitation which had occurred in the presence of the Golighers; but his observation went further. He asked himself a very natural question: Wherein do these phenomena fail to comply with natural law? What causes the table to rise? So he investigated and found that when anything was passed between the medium and the table during levitation the table dropped instantly. He deduced from this that the movement of the table was in some way connected with the medium’s body. He then placed the medium on a drawing board, fastened to a platform scale and proceeded to experiment.

“In red light with visibility such that he could see all those persons forming the circle clearly, Crawford placed a stool in the center of the group. The stool weighed two pounds and some ounces.

“Placing two observers who had come with him at the other end of the circle, he then requested the forces purporting to be present to lift the stool and hold it suspended in the air until told to lower it. This was done at once, the stool rising vertically in the air until its height was about four feet from the floor. Immediately the stool was lifted, the lever of the weighing machine, which had been balanced exactly to record the weight of the medium, namely 9 stone*, 10 lbs., 12 oz., rose against the top stop of the machine with a click, plainly audible, indicating that the medium’s weight had been increased. Readjusting the rider so that it again balanced, he then asked the invisible operators to move the stool up and down. This was done and the rider of the weighing machine went up and down in synchronism with the up-and-down movement of the stool.

*A stone weighs 14 pounds.

"These," Bob went on, "were the readings. 'Weight of the medium, chair and drawingboard was 9 st., 10 lb., 12 oz. Weight of the medium, chair and drawingboard during levitation was 9 st., 13 lb., 10 oz. Increased weight of the medium was 2 lb., 14 oz. Weight of the stool was 2 lb., 12 oz.' Crawford comments, 'I wish to add finally, that I fully satisfied myself during the experiment, that there was absolutely no fraud and that the phenomena were due to the action of psychic force alone'."

Bob closed the book and handed it over to Ned. "There is one of the most convincing books I know of.* Take it home with you and read over the other experiments. They are all worth while. Crawford also made some phonograph records of raps, proving that the sounds heard in a seance are ordinary objective sounds, and not the result of collective hallucination.

"Another interesting fact established by this investigator was, that not only did the weight of the medium increase during levitation, but there was also a slight increase in the weight of the sitters in the group averaging, as I recall it, about two ounces each."

"The fact was also established that there is a definite distance from the medium beyond which levitation does not occur. His observations explain a perfectly normal means of raising and carrying objects about the room by means of unseen extensions or emanations from the medium's body, called ectoplasm. When this material is being used by the invisible operators to lift objects, the medium's weight is increased by the weight of the object lifted. When the same material is being used by them for the making of so-called raps or signals—such as we heard at the beginning of the sitting with Mrs. Burling in Detroit, and the sound Crawford made phonograph records of—then the medium's weight decreases according to the loudness of the raps produced.

*The Reality of Psychic Phenomena, W. J. Crawford.

"In one of Crawford's experiments a loss of from eight to twenty pounds was shown. The loss of weight is merely temporary, the material used being returned to the medium's body at the close of the demonstration. The conclusion reached from these experiments was that rods or cylinders of material extended from the body of the medium and were used to move objects, to make sounds and also, as a further experiment showed, to punch impressions into pieces of putty placed some distance from the medium. The impressions left in the putty by the impact were oblong cavities $\frac{3}{4}$ " long, $\frac{1}{4}$ " deep.

"On thinking the matter over, Crawford stated that these markings were very similar to those left by the human thumb or finger."

"Couldn't they have been made by the finger or thumb of one of the group while Crawford was not watching?" argued Ned.

"That is a natural suspicion, but one that could easily be cleared up by comparing the impression found in the putty with those made on like material by the fingers and thumbs of the sitters present."

"What are you two smiling at?"

"You anticipated my next statement," replied Bob. "What if the finger prints of all the sitters were taken before a sitting and then you procured a thumb or finger print—made by the material taken from the medium—which was unlike any belonging to the sitters present. That would seem to imply that the ectoplasm, taken from the medium, could be used by invisible operators to form fingers, hands and so forth—just as modeling clay is used to form objects."

"Oh, then you'd have something worth while!" Huntington's eyes were alight with a new eagerness. "If a medium by means of ectoplasm supplied from his or her own body, should produce a thumb, the print of which, upon the testimony of experts, could be shown to be identical with the

thumb print of some one who had died—then you would have some real evidence.”

“Well, that’s precisely what has been done! Not once, but over thirty times in the Boston group sitting with Mrs. Crandon, better known as ‘Margery.’ Walter Stinson, her brother and control, has produced his thumb print and in doing so, has allowed the group to take flashlight photos of his ectoplasmic hand with which he produced it. The thumbprints were made in dental wax and the pictures show his hand taking the wax out of the warm water in which it is dipped to soften it, placing it on the table, pressing it with his thumb and dropping the finished mould in cold water to harden. Every one of the pictures shows the medium and the sitters on either side of her, holding her hands in theirs, while this ectoplasmic hand is on the table in front of her. In my opinion this is the most interesting piece of evidence yet produced. Crawford was on the right track but did not go far enough. In the April 1928 issue of the Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research, you will find cuts of ‘Walter’s’ thumb prints, should you care to study them.”

“Have they a thumb print made by Walter Stinson while living, with which to compare these made at the seance?” Ned asked.

“Yes. An old razor of his was found, on which was a thumb print which corresponds to those made by him since death.”

“Have these been checked by experts in the Bertillon system?” Ned was obviously interested.

“Yes—by one expert at that time and several others since. The statement of the first was to the effect that he had enough evidence upon which to hang a man. The others expressed much the same opinion.

“Why don’t they broadcast such an extraordinary fact?” Ned was showing evidence of real excitement.

“It is my impression that neither Dr. Crandon nor his wife wish to become the subjects of attacks by a host of

people who, under the guise of science, wage war with all those who depart in their thinking from orthodox scientific thought. The Crandons have already been subjected to the most vicious attacks by people whom we might expect to hold fair unbiased opinions; people in some cases almost hysterical in their prejudices; people who have not hesitated to weave their arguments, literally, out of whole cloth. It costs a man something to be a pioneer, you know."

"Science has been somewhat given to criticism of religion for opposing what it terms progress," stated Ethel. "It seems a bit ironic that it too should fall into the same error; and yet, if one reviews the history of either, he will find some in the ranks of both religion and science who oppose everything in the nature of a change in thought or action. Unfortunately, the general public does very little thinking of its own."

"Professor Hans Driesch, distinguished physiologist who holds the Chair of Philosophy, University of Leipsic, has made a statement which might interest you," Bob interposed. "His statement is this, 'The actuality of psychical phenomena is doubted, today, only by the incorrigible dogmatist'." Bob continued, "My feeling is that the cry of 'fraud' unsubstantiated is the explanation of a moron."

"Tell me: has anyone discovered how these invisible people, as you term them, can talk without any vocal cords, throat or tongue?" Ned inquired.

"They use what has been termed ectoplasm to make their vocal apparatus." Bob again crossed to the bookcase and returned with a photograph. "This was taken in Boston and shows what Walter Stinson terms his voice box. You can see the heavy cord of ectoplasm coming from 'Margery's' nostril, attached to this mass, resting on the table beside her head. Notice, also, the fine white fibre coming from her ear and attached to the large mass. This is composed of white brain substance and gives the nerve supply

to the voice box itself. The interesting characteristic of this mass is that it is not only composed of dark physical substance but of nerve substance as well—the latter is not visible to the eye and shows on the photographic plate only when a quartz lens is used.”

“Can you see and feel this voice-box, as you call it?”

“You can not only see and feel it*—it has a pulse and respiration of its own, not synchronous with that of the medium. Structures similar to this are produced by all independent voice mediums and used by those invisibles who speak at different seances.

“Let me remark, in passing, that the similarity which ectoplasmic structures bear to embryological structures is most amazing although creation is very rapid in the first instance and slow in the latter. A study of the structures which have been photographed at various seances, with our knowledge of embryology in mind, will show you that the similarity is striking.

“The ectoplasm itself has been analyzed and found to contain the same elements as those in the human body. These demonstrated facts take away the feeling of supernaturalism, held by many, in connection with this whole subject.”

“Dr. Gustave Geley** gives a rational explanation as to why light is detrimental to the development of psychic manifestations. He cites the histolysis of the insect as analogous to phenomena where a substance, (ectoplasm) emanating from the medium, is the basis of the manifestation. ‘The insect,’ he says, ‘after developing itself in the cocoon, disintegrates into a plasma which is later reorganized into quite a new form.’ Geley advances the hypothesis that the

*In 1926 two instructors of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology collected a sample at a Crandon sitting. This was divided into halves, and half sent to both Tufts and Technology. Analysis showed sodium, potassium, chlorine, water albumen, epithelial cells, and red blood corpuscles: all body products.

**French physicist and scientist.

substance which issues from the medium and which assumes various forms before being reabsorbed in his body, is the result of a process similar to that which occurs in the insect and in various living creatures. He reminds us that the processes of biological evolution take place slowly and in the dark; that laboratory experiments show them to be retarded by light.

"It looks as though mediumistic ability were a natural, but not fully understood, function on the part of certain individuals, just as playing by ear is natural to some while others are forced to develop their ability along musical lines by hard work and hours of practice."

"Did I understand you to say that ectoplasm dissolved in white light?"

"Yes. White light apparently prevents its being condensed sufficiently to be used."

"Well then, how do they take flashlight pictures of it?"

"The pictures can be taken only when Walter Stinson, Mrs. Crandon's control, gives his consent and has, according to his statement, especially prepared the ectoplasm to withstand the instantaneous flash and not injure the medium. You may be interested in knowing that there is a case on record where a white light was turned on by one of the sitters unexpectedly during a psychic manifestation. The ectoplasm being used, apparently issuing from the abdomen of the medium, returned to his body with such force that a large haematoma (blood blister) resulted and he was ill for weeks. Under certain conditions, when the operators are prepared, it seems to cause no harm."

Ned, whose wonderment was now plain, moved restlessly in his chair.

"What good does it all do? Our effort in this earthly existence is to develop our own individuality in order to be able to stand alone. Placing any dependence upon those who have gone on would weaken, not strengthen."

"The only means one has for developing his personality and individuality is to force his reach to exceed his grasp," ventured Ethel, in reply. "One's personal problems can only be worked out by a full realization of the fact that the example and endeavor of those on other planes of life than ours have a direct influence upon us. We gladly give time in order to attend lectures, musicales and the opera, because they stimulate us and open up new mental vistas. Thus we can profit from an interchange of ideas between ourselves and these people who dwell on different planes than ours. As to whether the influence of people who have gone on weakens rather than strengthens us, we are, in all probability, like the little electric light bulb." She indicated the light at her shoulder by a slight movement of her head. "In order to fulfill its function it must have, feeding it continuously, a great electric system of which it is, so to speak, merely the final instrument. Its power comes to it over the wires.

"It would be no more foolish, to my way of thinking, for that little bulb to flatter itself that, all alone, it was generating sufficient power to function independently of the power house, than for any individual to feel that he can function independently of the great constructive universal forces. Like the radio, the more perfected the individual instrument, the more perfect its selectivity, so that the undesired can be tuned out and that desired come in clearly. Just so, the highly developed personality can tune in, as it were, upon the constructive forces of the universe, either here or in the so-called hereafter. For we go on learning and developing, apparently forever."

"When you say different planes, what do you mean?" Ned broke in.

"I mean different planes of development on this dear old earth of ours."

"Oh, I see what you mean—a difference in development, mentally and spiritually. Well, it seems to me the present life should be sufficient for anyone."

"There is, I admit, a real value to the present life, a value which every intelligent person is reluctant to give up, but isn't that enhanced by the thought that it may survive beyond the limits of this particular sphere?"

"And yet," Ned extended his feet toward the open fire, "there is so much to be learned right here and now, in this life, that one has very little time to give to anything of so purely theoretical a nature as survival."

"True," stated Burton, "yet, if we never took time to learn anything about any other country, our ignorance would result in a state of constant confusion. One has only to consider the effect produced in our country by the changes that take place, for example, today in Russia. And yet, conclusions of any value regarding Russia can not be reached until the entire Asiatic situation is visualized.

"Again, a child cannot become interested in a toy without wondering what the name on it means and why it was manufactured in Japan, Germany, and so on, and by this very process absorb some small knowledge of other countries and their peoples. National isolation is a thing no longer possible to maintain. Isolated individuality is equally impossible without introversion and loss of usefulness. Your job of, what you term, making personal adjustments embraces and influences the entire universe to some degree."

"I am not entirely in accord with that idea, because it seems to imply subservience to some prearranged scheme of things on the part of every individual. I rather enjoy thinking of myself as free to do and say just what it pleases me to do and say without restriction or supervision."

"But, Ned, doesn't individuality seem to be a factor that cannot be interfered with by God or man?" asked Ethel. "You may develop yourself, on the one hand, or allow yourself to degenerate, on the other, and there is no way to prevent you from carrying out your wishes in the matter whether you are in the earth life or out of it."

Huntington continued his questioning, "Why should people who have died bother to come back to this earthly existence, even if only for a short space of time, in order to talk to us? Surely they must have worth while things with which to occupy themselves, if they continue individual existence, without wasting their time talking to people still on earth."

"It would seem to me," Ethel answered readily, "that the impulse which animates them is the same as that which sends people on this earth from comfortable homes and easy environment into the poorer sections to give of their time and money in order to help those less fortunate in making better adjustments to life's demands. Were those who give their effort to literary pursuits to close their minds to the results being achieved in other lines of endeavor, they would merely limit advancement. The interchange of thought between various planes of development on this earth results in the development of all. Just as the more advanced here give gladly of their time and effort, so do those no longer limited by the restrictions of three dimensions."

"What might come after death never interested me a great deal," Ned remarked.

"It will not imperil your individuality to learn from anyone who may have achieved a broader experience. The matter of what comes next is not as important as broadening your understanding of the universe in its entirety. The more one knows, the more open-minded and intelligent one is apt to become."

"That may be—but we are all looking for comfort of some nature, and what comfort can one derive from this study?" Huntington queried.

"In my opinion, spiritual enrichment, not material comfort, is what we are all seeking and, Schopenhauer to the contrary, notwithstanding, I think increased knowledge will help to achieve that end," retorted Mrs. Burton.

"The grave is the visible terminus of this life and my ideas have never carried me beyond it," smilingly replied Huntington. "Our immortality, if we have any, must exist in our children and the example our living has left for those who come after us." He rose and started for the hall. "It is time for me to leave and allow you people to retire. May we continue this at some later date?"

Ethel had risen also. "Before you go," she said, "I should like to ask you a question regarding the example we set for those who follow. Is it sufficient immortality? Is it not like saying we do not need to attend school after, say, the eighth grade, and it is sufficient that we leave the schoolhouse for those who follow? Your other statement regarding our children who serve as our immortal part fails to take into account the fact that this earth is apparently cooling so rapidly that scientists are already estimating the time to elapse until it will no longer sustain life. When that time comes, what about immortality gained through our descendants?"

Huntington smiled and bowed. "I shall return to the battle some other evening. Good-night, and thanks for an interesting time."

The door closed and the guest was gone.

Burton smiled at his wife "It is my belief that we shall hear from him further on the subject, Ethel."

"Why not arrange a sitting with Elm, the Buffalo medium, so that he may enjoy the benefit of first hand information?" inquired Mrs. Burton.

"A good suggestion. There may be others in an inquiring state of mind who would like to join us."

CHAPTER V

THERE stopped at the Burton's, one night, Dr. Colin Noel.

"I was passing your way and took the liberty of calling. You must pardon my intrusion," he said smilingly, "but I have been hearing rumors of late."

Burton greeted him warmly. "Come in, doctor. Surely these rumors cannot be so bad when they bring you here."

"I was told that you had seen a medium called 'Margery' at work, in fact, had sat in her circle several times. The book 'Margery' interested me greatly, but left my mind in a somewhat chaotic state. There were questions that occurred to me, questions which perhaps you can answer."

While he spoke they had entered the living room. Noel was a very intense individual, a notable success as a specialist in medicine. He possessed a keen mind and a characteristic directness which, at times, became almost disconcerting.

"A friend of mine, who claimed to know about the 'Margery' experiments, told me something of them," he began. "'Margery' is a doctor's wife, is she not?"

"Yes, she is the wife of Dr. L. R. G. Crandon, one of the leading surgeons in Boston. Dr. Crandon, I believe, was at one time connected with the Harvard Medical School in the capacity of lecturer."

"I see," nodded Noel, "And may I ask who pays for all this work she is doing? It must cost money to carry on psychic experiments of that kind."

"Mrs. Crandon's control, Walter Stinson, has told her that, should she accept anything from anyone, directly or indirectly, for seances, he would cease his communications at

once. He believes that a paid medium loses caste with the public, so Dr. Crandon foots all bills personally."

"Doesn't that strike you as curious?" asked Noel, eying the other narrowly. "Why does he do it? It certainly couldn't help him in a professional way. Quite the opposite, I should suppose."

"Dr. Crandon is a man of broad vision with the crusader spirit. Realizing the effect the certainty of survival would have on our every day lives and actions, he grasps the tremendous importance of no longer ignoring the findings in the field. At a great personal sacrifice, he has enlisted the aid and cooperation of some of the finest minds in science and research," opined Burton.

"You know, I went to a seance once," admitted Noel, with a grin. "A trumpet moved through the room." He swung his arm in a wide circle. "Voices came from it. Bells rang. There was an inner and an outer circle of sitters. I was with the outside group—but close enough to see. The messages were so trivial. In fact, the whole affair struck me as being particularly childish."

"Suppose, Dr. Noel, that you were to come face to face with a friend you hadn't seen for years and didn't expect to meet; an observer would, no doubt, consider the conversation between such a friend and yourself equally trivial. On the other hand—people, new at communication, usually feel that the memory of the person purporting to be speaking should function with an accuracy proportionate to the importance the listener attaches to the material being remembered. In our own existence we find disconnected events remaining clearly in our memory, while those leading up to and following them cannot be recalled. Certain persons can remember anniversaries, while others find it impossible. Events which might seem trivial and unimportant

to us may have made a lasting impression upon the memory of the person communicating.

“Another point worth remembering, is the fact that the person attempting communication is literally clinging to the medium’s vibrations in order to manifest at all. You would find yourself in a somewhat similar situation were you forced to talk at the bottom of the sea. First it would be necessary for you to become accustomed to the diving suit you were compelled to use. Then after making that adjustment, you would have to discover how to make yourself heard. Under these circumstances, the people listening for your voice, realizing the difficulties under which you were attempting to work, would not expect much from you in the way of a long discourse. Certainly, they would grant that a certain amount of practice would be required.”

Noel was thoughtful, “Does this Walter Stinson tell you anything worth knowing?”

“In my opinion, the instruction he gives for living now and here, as well as his philosophy, is both illuminating and helpful.”

Noel interrupted. “Before you come to that, tell me this. I have heard it said that the things which ‘Margery’ does can only happen when Dr. Crandon, her husband, is present. Is that true?”

“It has been my good fortune to sit with Mrs. Crandon when Dr. Crandon was present. He sits near her because he realizes the possible danger to which she is exposed when in trance, were anyone to interfere and thus injure or bruise the ectoplasm. That happened on one occasion and ‘Margery’ was very ill for several weeks, losing some fourteen or fifteen pounds in weight. I have also sat with Mrs. Crandon in Buffalo and at Niagara Falls when Dr. Crandon was in Boston. The phenomena occurs just the same when he is some 550 miles away. Does that answer your question?”

"Quite. Now tell me how the Crandons became interested in this line of research?" The doctor was searching his pockets for pipe and tobacco.

"The story in brief is this: Dr. Crandon's interest began through a chance visit to a medium on the part of Mrs. Crandon and a friend. Many have made such visits—and yet—that, in a word, describes the beginning of the 'Margery' mediumship.

"The wife of the average surgeon leads a rather prosaic life. One must recognize, of course, the demands of the world upon one's husband and rest content with being known as 'the doctor's wife.' You are familiar with that situation," smiled Burton. "So, prior to the year 1923, 'Margery' lived the conventional life of a surgeon's wife in an equally conventional street, called Lime, in the city of Boston.

"Now anything might happen in Boston. The fires of political revolt were once kindled there, to which fact its now conservative inhabitants will proudly attest; and something destined to be of importance to the world happened that afternoon in 1923 when Mrs. Crandon and her friend, Mrs. E. W. Brown, sallied forth more in the spirit of a lark more than anything else,—to visit a medium.

"A cryptic message from the invisible world, a hurried trip home, a visit to the same medium by the doctor a few days later, a promise from Walter that he would speak through his sister, Mrs. Crandon, followed. They began experiments, following the lines pursued by Dr. Crawford . . . table tippings . . . investigators . . . Houdini . . . charges . . . counter-charges. Very briefly this is the way Dr. and Mrs. Crandon's interest developed. Incidentally, Dr. Crandon is a profound student and has read extensively on the subject of psychical research. He is familiar with the work of the leading investigators.

"Meantime, life for the surgeon's wife became anything but prosaic, and Number Ten Lime Street suddenly took on,

for the superstitious at least, the atmosphere of a haunted house——” Bob Burton and Noel exchanged smiles.

“There is no such atmosphere about the doctor and his charming wife, however. More cultured, intelligent people one does not often meet. The unselfish, tireless effort they have contributed to progress in this field will some day be estimated at its true value.

“In the early days of the mediumship Dr. Crandon and his wife employed pseudonyms, in the vain hope of avoiding publicity. Mrs. Crandon became ‘Margery’ and her husband simply ‘F. H.’ ‘Walter,’ as you know, is a brother of Mrs. Crandon and it was some 17 years ago that he met death in a railroad accident.”

“Tell me more about what happened at the time Mrs. Crandon and her friend visited the medium,” Dr. Noel broke in eagerly.

“The two women, both the wives of doctors, walked to the medium’s house in much the same manner as would a couple of school girls. It was all more or less of a joke.

“They did not expect an immediate hearing. (As a rule, you know, if you have ever had experience with a certain type of medium, you are not given an immediate appointment but put off until a later date. The reasons for this vary with the medium’s popularity or with his or her degree of genuineness.) But Mrs. Crandon and Mrs. Brown were ushered into the medium’s presence at once.

“If Mrs. Brown received any message on that eventful afternoon she probably does not recall it, for the medium immediately went into a trance. Mrs. Crandon was informed that a spirit was present, furthermore, that the spirit laid claim to relationship with her. He was her brother, Walter Stinson, killed 17 years before in a railroad accident.

“As evidence of his genuineness, her brother related, through the medium, familiar incidents of their childhood, spent together in rural Ontario. He referred to a favorite

colt they had broken and to other more intimate things. Finally, he promised that he would speak through her in the very near future.

"When Dr. Crandon was told of this experience he did not laugh. Within a few days he, himself, made a visit to the home of the same medium, unannounced. His visit resulted in evidential messages from Walter Stinson who made himself known as the doctor's brother-in-law.

"A few evenings later the Crandons, the Browns and two other friends, gathered in an upper room of the Lime Street residence to conduct their own experiments. The stage was set and the 'Margery' mediumship began that very night. From this the most outstanding mediumship in America has developed."

"Did they get this 'Walter' voice at once or was it a gradual process?" asked Dr. Noel.

"It was really an unusually rapid development—but many months passed before Walter Stinson could whisper in an independent voice."

Noel interrupted sharply. "When you say independent, do you mean a voice not 'Margery's'?"

"Yes."

"How can you know it is not produced by her voice in some way?"

"Investigators checked this by having Mrs. Crandon hold a quantity of colored liquid in her mouth while the voice was speaking, and eject the same amount following the experiment. Later, a more scientific device was invented, by Dr. Mark Richardson, known as the 'voice-cut-out.' This was simple, but conclusive. A circular air tight container, with a number of glass tubes projecting from the top, was used. A rubber tube, covered with metal conduit, was slipped over each opening and every sitter held a glass mouth-

piece connected to the outer end of this tube. Each mouthpiece had an opening at the tip, to be covered by the tongue. An opening on the upper and lower sides, close to a circular glass shield, covered by the lips. A central tube from the airtight container extended to a U shaped glass and covered one arm of the U. The other end was left open. In the U tube was enough water to fill each of the arms half way up its height. A luminous float rested on the water in both arms. Each sitter placed a mouthpiece between his teeth, with his tongue held over the end opening, his upper and lower lips closing the openings next the mouth shield.

“When all was ready the last person blew on his tube causing the luminous float, in the arm of the upright glass U which had the tube connected to its top, to be depressed, and the float, in the arm with the end open, to rise. All the mouthpieces being held, no air could escape, and the floats remained at different levels. If any sitter, including the medium, had moved the lips or tongue, the upper float would have dropped instantly.

“With this complete check the Walter Stinson voice has said such sentences as, ‘Jane is a jazzy jaybird, by jiggers’—impossible to say without moving lips or tongue.

“At present, as an additional check, Mrs. Crandon is placed in a glass-sided cabinet like a telephone booth. Her hands, protruding through openings on either side are wired to staples, fastened below the openings. Both ankles are similarly fastened to the floor of the booth and a large leather collar is locked around her neck and fastened to the back wall of the cabinet. Thus, with all possible movement of the medium’s hands, feet and head eliminated, the voice cut-out is placed in her mouth. The balance of the tubes are in use sealing the lips of the sitters present. Walter Stinson talks, recites poetry, tells stories, moves luminous objects about the cabinet. This occurs under absolute mechanical control of the group,—control that is not subject to the possibility of human weakness.”

"Hasn't Mrs. Crandon been exposed by investigators; some of them at least, well known persons?" asked Noel.

"Two investigating committees disbanded under strained relationship due to this famous mediumship—by reason, as far as one can judge, of what H. A. Overstreet in his book, **About Ourselves**, calls 'the seductive art of wish-thinking,'—(the projecting of our strong emotions into situations. Behind the strong emotion is a wish to arrive at certain conclusions. This leads to a biased interpretation of the facts—the closing of our minds to ideas we do not like. Of course this tendency is characteristic; it is an inevitable limitation of the human mind. Investigators are also human.)

"Most so-called investigators who made up the personnel of the committees have, to all appearances, attended the sittings for the sole purpose of detecting fraud, and not to study and classify the phenomena produced. These committees were made up of persons of widely differing attainments, points of view and sense of honor. To investigate faked phenomena and report on them is one thing, but to face real phenomena is quite another. Under these circumstances wish-thinking served only to produce confusion, as it was radically contradicted by the facts. That the mediumship of Mrs. Crandon has survived three investigations and two so-called exposures would seem a fairly strong argument in favor of its genuineness."

"Are there any records to show that any other investigated mediums have survived more than one exposure?"

"None that I know of," replied Burton. "The investigation of the 'Margery' mediumship by the Scientific American Committee was a farce as nearly as I can gather. The records of the proceedings are sufficient to condemn it. One of the committee declared the phenomena genuine, two hedged. Mr. Houdini, a stranger to scientific attainment, yielded himself up completely to his prejudices—wish-thinking—and condemned the whole thing without qualification.

(Obviously it was good advertising for him.)* The attitude of the remaining member is difficult to understand.

"J. Malcolm Bird, in his book 'Margery,' makes some statements that explain the failure of this committee to reach an agreement. He seems to feel that an honest and competent, serious-minded investigator cannot sit indefinitely without arriving at an opinion. Carrington, he points out, was ready to declare for the validity of the phenomena occurring in the presence of 'Margery' after 10 sittings. Comstock, Bird feels, was well aware in his own mind of their validity, but wished to observe them for a longer period. McDougall had a repugnance against disturbing "the philosophy of a lifetime." Prince, as research officer of the American Society for Psychical Research, should have shown more interest. Receiving permission to view this mediumship in the summer of 1923, he failed to examine it until in Boston on other business in May, 1924. Prince sat three times as a member of the committee and refused to join in their reports, stating that he kept his own records, copies of which he would give them; a promise which was never fulfilled.

"In the 80 sittings enjoyed by the sub-committee no attempt was made to record the pulse, temperature, respiration, blood pressure or weight of the medium, either before or after a sitting.** The temperature of the room was never recorded. No measurements of the seance room were made. A strange neglect of essential details. Bird openly charges Houdini with fraud and describes his statements as plain lies. Bird's book throws much light on the work of the committee."

"How about the Harvard group of investigators I have read about?"

*November, 1924 issue of Scientific American.

**True mediumship has a tendency to show marked changes in pulse, temperature, respiration and so forth during occurrence of phenomena.

"They found their escape in rather an odd type of explanation. I have the report these gentlemen made. Let me read it to you."

Burton walked to his desk and came back with a newspaper clipping.* Noel reached for it, "Let me read it, I can get it better that way."

Dr. Noel perused the article in silence for some minutes. Upon reaching the conclusion he said, "I suppose you allude to this, and read aloud:

The observers do not question the good faith of Dr. or Mrs. Crandon, or the sincerity of their belief in the genuineness of the mediumship and the supernormal origin of the phenomena. That nothing in these reports shall be interpreted as a charge of conscious or deliberate fraud. That many of the facts may be reconciled by supposing the phenomena to be the product of an automatism built up by direct and auto-suggestion in a way of which Dr. and Mrs. Crandon were unconscious. That 'Walter's' voice in trance appears to be an hypnotic impersonation, not, properly speaking, a secondary or dis-associated personality.

"There you have it, doctor," said Burton, with sarcasm, as the other finished. "In other words, Dr. Crandon suggests to Mrs. Crandon, and the hypnotic effect upon her is such, that with complete mechanical control, she unconsciously, and not of her own volition produces all the phenomena at a Crandon sitting."

"That sounds like scientific craw-fishing," was Noel's only comment.

"I would like to have that same committee explain just one of a series of experiments made this winter."

"What were they?"

"A group sat in a seance room at number ten Lime Street. Mrs. Crandon sat, with others, in a group ten miles from Lime Street. One of the Lime Street group picked an unknown card, prepared by an unknown sailor at the Boston

*The Boston Herald, dated Wednesday, October 21, 1925.

Navy Yard at the request of the captain in charge, from a box containing some 30 different cards, all prepared in like manner. He held the card up in the dark room for a few seconds then handed it to his neighbor who placed it in a bill-fold and put it in his pocket. 'Walter' had said that he would rap the number of letters on the card, if it contained a single word. Five loud raps sounded on the side of the cabinet.

"Ten miles away, Mrs. Crandon drew a picture of a package of Camel cigarettes and under it wrote the letters E and L. Two hundred and fifty miles away, in New York City, another medium drew a similar picture and under it wrote the letters C and A. Five hundred miles away, in Niagara Falls, still a third medium did the same thing and wrote the letter M.

"This card, just referred to, which was picked at random in the dark, was found to contain a picture of a package of Camel cigarettes with the word Camel pasted under it. An entity at 10 Lime Street, not one of the sitters, was able to make out what was on the card, rap out the number of letters contained in the word, sufficiently impress three different mediums miles away, so that they recorded the impressions, as I have described. The card, produced later, corresponded in every detail with these recorded impressions. Rather silly to attribute this cross correspondence to a split personality in Mrs. Crandon. Isn't it?

"On another evening Walter Stinson stated that if those present would prepare cards and keep them concealed until requested, he would have another medium 550 miles away describe the cards and their contents in Chinese. One card had a peculiar drawing and the word 'Confucius' written on it. This card was drawn by the distant medium as promised and the word 'Confucius' written in Chinese. A second card had the proverb on it, 'A rolling stone gathers no moss.' The distant medium wrote in Chinese, 'A traveling teacher gathers no gold.' A third card, in the posses-

sion of a Judge Hill, was described and under it written in Chinese characters, 'Little Mountain.' A split personality that is capable of this accomplishment should be qualified to remove the word 'split' from the committee's conclusions, and merely be known as a 'personality.'

"As a final manifestation of the fact that he is a distinct personality, Walter Stinson arranged to have peices of marked wax sent to this medium five hundred and fifty miles from Boston. Each piece was marked and weighed to the fifth decimal point. A section was cut off each piece and mailed to the Society for Psychical Research in New York. The balance of each piece was sent to the distant medium. Sitting in a group, under control, this medium was used by Walter Stinson to produce two thumb prints. These were mailed to a finger print expert at the Boston Navy Yard. Both were perfect 'Walter' thumb prints. The wax cakes were checked in order to remove all question of substitution. A finger print means a person!"

"Well, rather. But tell me about Houdini and his discoveries."

"As I understand it, the thing which terminated the Scientific American investigation more speedily than might have been the case was the exposure by 'Walter' of Harry Houdini, and the proving of attempted trickery and planting of evidence. The details are covered by J. Malcolm Bird, in his book 'Margery.' The main facts are that Houdini tried to discredit the mediumship with the idea of commercializing it for his own gain."

There was a meditative silence.

"What the dickens does it all lead to?" questioned Noel with a frown. "Suppose communication is possible, what does one get out of it?"

"To my mind, an extended knowledge and insight into life in relation to its continuity. At present, as some one has so aptly put it, 'Science is bankrupt on the edge of the grave; religion offers only a sleepy comfort.' Psychic re-

search will not only kill materialism, which is already dying, but knock out agnosticism, which is the prevalent condition everywhere among thinking people."

"And what will be the effect on the present religious beliefs?"

"To know one's self as an outcome and recipient of an unmeasured vital energy, inherent in all that is, and confidently to trust and obey its urge toward finer expressions, is religion. Psychic research will reinforce that,—not harm it.

"I have a friend, who, like yourself, asks many questions. I am planning to have a medium down from Buffalo for the purpose of answering them. Would you care to join us?"

"I'd like to very much. When can it be arranged?"

"We will give you plenty of notice. Then your information can come direct from one claiming to have a hundred years advanced experience."

"I'll be here. Let me know." He rose and started quickly toward the door. In the hall he turned.

"Thank you for the patience you've had with my questions. I appreciate it. One in my profession realizes, perhaps oftener than others, the need of definite, comforting knowledge in the presence of the process called death. People are here, and then they are no longer here. Into oblivion or——."

He shrugged his expressive shoulders, seized Burton's hand and with a vigorous, 'Good-night,' was gone.

CHAPTER VI

SEVERAL days passed before the Burtons again heard from their friend Ned. Then one night he dropped in for a little chat, and came almost at once to the subject of psychic research.

"There are some things regarding which I would like to be put straight. Do you mind a few more questions?" he smilingly inquired.

"Remember, we do not pose as experts, but shall be very glad to answer any questions which come within the scope of our knowledge," responded Bob.

"Then let me state frankly that, although I find myself far from convinced, the subject intrigues me and stirs my curiosity. In thinking about it, several things have occurred to me. First, what other mediums are being investigated and who is conducting the investigations?"

"The American and English Societies of Psychical Research are investigating all cases of mediumship submitted to them. Independent investigators are also accumulating accurate records upon which to base judgment.

"In the latter group Baron von Schrenck-Notzing, in Brannan, has reported the results of investigations with such mediums as the Schneider brothers, and others well known in Europe. He carried on the work in a private laboratory especially equipped for this type of research and the reports of his results are most interesting. The room used was furnished with a cabinet, placed behind and to one side of the medium. The curtains covering the opening of this cabinet had luminous bands along their edges, thus making any movement of the curtains visible to the observers at once. As a further check the cabinet was surrounded by a fence, the top rail of which was luminous. Luminous

gloves and shoes were placed upon the medium, who sat in front and to one side of the cabinet, so that any movement of his or her extremities would be observed by the sitters. As a further check, the feet of the medium were placed upon a contact board so arranged that, were the contact broken, a luminous number would show up at the top of the cabinet. The medium wore a jacket, the sleeves of which, were fastened to gloves by safety pins which were sealed."

"Why are cabinets, apparently, so much a part of a medium's equipment?" inquired Ned.

"In our discussion of Crawford's work, we found that all manifestations occurring in the presence of a medium seemed to be due to an emanation from the medium's body, termed ectoplasm. This substance seems to act more quickly and intensely when confined within narrower limits than those afforded by the average room. Hence, the small space within the cabinet walls would seem an advantage in confining this ectoplasmic force."

"Is the Baron's work accepted by other investigators without question?" queried Ned.

"There was one case reported where his results were questioned. As I recall it, he had reported the mediumship of a young man named Otto C. This same young medium was later detected in fraudulent production of psychic phenomena with the assistance of one of the sitters. He signed a confession, maintaining, however, that only since losing his real mediumistic powers had he resorted to tricks. Loss of his powers he claimed was due to overwork and the holding of protracted sittings. When investigated by Baron von Schrenck-Notzing, in the Baron's personal laboratory, he possessed real psychic ability. The fact that he later lost his power has no bearing upon the findings of investigators preceding that period. A certain Mr. Vinton, however, as a result of this, questioned the Baron's ability to detect fraud."

"Who are the Schneiders you mentioned?" asked Huntington.

"The Schneiders are a family of mediums. The Baron invited investigators of note to Munich to sit with them in order that they might discover fraud, should any exist. They left convinced of the fact that they had witnessed abnormal manifestations. Willie Schneider has now completed his studies and is practicing dentistry. Rudi, his younger brother, about twenty-one years of age, has been examined at the National Laboratory for psychical research located in the building occupied by the British Society of London, England. Under complete electrical control of not only the medium, but all those present, phenomena of a high order were produced," Bob concluded.

"Are you familiar with the arrangement of the control?" inquired his visitor.

"Every sitter wears cotton gloves across the palms of which, metal straps are fastened with insulated wire connecting each pair of gloves. This carries the contact across the space being occupied by the sitter. Socks, arranged in like manner, cover the feet of all present. Metal plates fastened to the floor, between the chairs, allow one foot of each sitter to cover the half of the plate nearest him. By means of this arrangement, when all hands and feet are in their proper position, an indicator light comes on. The movement of a single hand or foot extinguishes the light. Four separate contact lights are arranged for the hands and feet of the medium. With this electrical control in operation there is practically no possibility of fraudulent production of phenomena.

"A sensitive transmitting thermograph, placed in the cabinet, often records a drop in temperature of 2.95 degrees below that of the room."

"That is interesting. What causes the drop in temperature?" inquired Ned.

"It apparently is connected in some way with the emanations which come from the medium," explained Burton.

"I have heard the statement made that everything produced in a seance could be produced by a good conjurer, under like conditions. How about that?" questioned Huntington with a grin.

"Were one to believe their statements, it would seem that all the leading conjurers in the world have only been awaiting an opportunity to reproduce the results obtained by any medium, under like conditions. Yet, when Mr. Harry Price, of the British College, offered a thousand pounds to any of them who would produce the Schneider phenomena, under like control, no takers appeared, although the offer was given wide publicity. As I recall it, Dennis Bradley offered Clive Mackelyne one hundred pounds if he could produce the Valiantine voices* under like conditions of control but the offer was not accepted. Magicians have occasionally attempted to reproduce phenomena produced by real mediums but, when under similar conditions, they have always failed. The baffling fact that, with Rudi Schneider, the phenomena take place in the cabinet while he sits outside it, some four feet away, gives the conjurers pause.

"But to get back to von Schrenck-Notzing, the Baron's sittings have been attended by over a hundred Germans of scientific attainment, who have decided against the possibility of fraud, and the work has been carried on over a period of nine years. I should like to read you a description of the procedure as carried on by Baron von Schrenck-Notzing in his own laboratory. The article is written by one Florizel von Reuter** and goes into very minute detail. I shall merely touch on those sections which describe conditions preventing fraudulent production (of phenomena).

*Valiantine, world famous medium, of New York City, has produced independent voices which have spoken in sixteen different languages in one evening.

**Psychic Science.—April, 1928.

'The sitters take their places in an especially equipped room fitted up with all manner of appliances for gradual diminution or increase of light.

As many as half a dozen cameras are placed at different angles of the room to be made use of if required.

Paraffin preparations for the purpose of taking hand imprints or moulds are also at hand.'

"Von Reuter goes on to describe the materializing cabinet, located in a corner of the room behind the medium. The formation of the circle itself he describes as follows:

'The circle is composed of six persons, any extras forming an outside circle. At the extreme left end of the circle facing the fence sits Baron Schrenck-Notzing, luminous bands on his arms, his hands controlled by this right hand neighbor.

Behind him is a table upon which are laid various objects such as a tambourine, a music box, a 20 lb. weight, a long-handled fan, a stick—like a conductor's baton—a zither, a paper basket of open wicker-work, a tablet about fourteen inches square, a handkerchief, and so forth, all of them luminous and clearly visible in the dark.

The medium sits facing the circle about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a yard in front of the right side of the curtain. His right shoulder is a full yard distant from the edge of the table inside the screen. He puts on illuminated gloves and shoes, which are connected by a conducting cord to an electric indicator of numbers above the curtains and clearly visible to all except the medium. He places his feet upon a contact board. The electric indicator shows in red light the numbers 1-2 (right hand, left hand) and 3-4 (right foot, left foot). Were the medium to attempt to free either hand or foot a number would disappear, the number corresponding to the hand or foot moved.

The controller also wears electrically controlled gloves. He holds the medium's hands continually and presses the medium's legs between his knees. If he, the controlling person, lets go of the hands an instant, the corresponding number on the curtain goes out.

It is difficult to see how, under such conditions, it would be possible for the medium to resort to trickery. In case the electric control should fail, there remains always the equally effective hand control and the illuminated arm bands.'

"The writer goes on with a statement that seems to have a great bearing on the entire subject of physical control of mediums, and everyone will agree that without proper control, all phenomena that may be produced are impossible of checking. This is the statement to which I refer," Burton read:

"To some it may seem a great marvel that phenomena ever take place under these circumstances. That is, in reality, a most effective proof that the regrettable objection to strict control, displayed by the majority of mediums, is the result of their own mental state, a sort of auto-suggestion they build up, which does indeed hinder the phenomena. That it is, in such cases, not strict control, but the mentality of the medium which is responsible, has been clearly proven by Schrenck-Notzing control method with the Schneider brothers and others. Several hundred sittings with them have been held in Munich laboratory under the conditions just described, without the slightest suspicion of the genuineness of their mediumship having been evoked in the minds of scientific investigators. There have been comparatively few negative sittings and certainly these few were not caused by control conditions'."

"That would seem to be a very definite challenge to all real mediums," suggested Ned. "They should stop objecting to proper investigation and allow their mediumship to stand or fall on its own merits when under strict control conditions. Perhaps some day the point of development may be reached when only mediums who have been tested and found genuine will be allowed to continue the practice of their mediumistic powers. We may even come to the point of issuing certificates, or some form of license."

"Let me finish what is said here regarding the usual course these sittings take:

1. 'Examination of the seance room and of the cabinet by various members of the circle.
2. Bodily examination of the medium, also of the medium's mouth. He is then clothed in a suit of white pajamas put on over his under clothing. He wears stockings and his usual street shoes.

3. The guests enter the seance room and are assigned their seats. The medium puts on illuminated control shoes, which are carefully tied on, and sits down with his feet on control board. The medium and the controller of the evening then each assume their respective control gloves, those of the medium being fastened to his pajama sleeves by safety pins, which are securely sealed. The illuminated bands are already sewed on his sleeves.

4. The medium's pulse is now recorded, and the controller and medium clasp hands, the legs of the latter being firmly pressed between the knees of the former. The stenographer takes her place and Baron Schrenck-Notzing dictates the beginning of the evening's protocol. The stenographer has full red light at her desk.

5. The light is then lowered and after a short silence of the sitters, the first trance symptoms are noticeable, violent spasmodic jerks of the body and accelerated respiration.

6. The medium's control or 'trance personality' announces its presence.

(The animistic maintain that the control entity is merely a divided personality of the medium. However, this is only a theory and has yet to be proved, and, in the meanwhile, the sitters are all compelled to accept the spiritualistic theory if any results are to be expected. There are always plenty of signs which indicate the presence of an independent intelligence. Any doubt in the presence of the medium as to the authenticity of the controlling personality would have a catastrophic effect upon the phenomena.)*"

7. Baron Schrenck-Notzing greets the controlling intelligence and requests it to express any wishes it may have. Sometimes a change in the order of the circle is demanded, so that the most mediumistic person may be near the medium. Occasionally, a change in the controlling person is requested, while upon rare occasions the removal from the room of some unsympathetic person is insisted upon. All requests are scrupulously acceded to, in order to avoid any disturbing influence upon the vibrations'."

"There you have it again," Ned cut in, "these everlasting vibrations! Of what force are they composed?"

*One cannot investigate without doubt. Apparently there is a marked difference in the viewpoint of various disembodied entities, some do not seem to care whether you acknowledge their identity or not. A polite courteous attitude seems to help, however.

"Perhaps some day they will discover that electricity and these vibrations are very much the same thing.

"There is only one more item on this seance-room procedure, and do let me finish that, before we start on conjectures and discussion. But again it deals with vibrations.

8. 'Conversation amongst the sitters is now requested, as silence, or too constrained expectation are well known to be disadvantageous for the development of psychic phenomena. A brisk conversation is always desirable, conversation which is supported usually by phonograph music.*

"Here are some phenomena that occur under these conditions.

'Swelling of curtains as figures build up behind them, tempestuous blowing of curtains, table lifted,—knocked over and sometimes drawn into the cabinet, tambourine passed through the air, shaken, beaten on table,—music box started and stopped upon request,** 20 lb. weight lifted from table to floor without being dropped. Hands form between curtains of cabinet which can be observed in red light.'

"The 'touching phenomena' as he describes it, seems a trifle extreme to be classed as a 'touch.' He says—

'The writer of these lines is asked to stand before the opening in the curtain. A moment later, he is seized and pushed so violently that he almost loses his balance'."

"Some touch!" ejaculated Ned. "Tell me this. Do a medium's powers improve with sittings, or is his ability along that line a given quality and quantity right from the start?"

"Some seem to improve up to a certain point. On the other hand, too frequent, long sittings seem to decrease the medium's power. I am glad you brought up that question, for the failing powers of a medium have a direct bearing upon fraud. Several very famous mediums have been investigated by men of scientific standing while in their

*Music seems to be a universal requirement in successful seances.

**This is a marked phenomenon with 'Walter' of the Crandon mediumship often repeated—upon request and otherwise.

hey-day of power, so to speak. Later they lost all the power they ever possessed—but having been more or less famous, continued to be sought after, and as in the case of Otto C., unable longer to produce genuine phenomena, they resorted to tricks. There are records of exposures, by rather mediocre investigators, of former famous mediums who have been reported upon by well qualified, experienced investigators. The mediums have since that time lost their power and are no longer mediums at all. Our new investigator, discovering their fraudulent methods, rushes to the press, claiming to have made a discovery missed or overlooked by former observers. He takes great credit to himself as being more keen than the others. What really occurred was that he had been observing a person no longer possessing mediumistic powers. Former investigators may have dealt with this person when genuine, phenomena-producing ability was present. The fact that he later lost his power has no bearing upon the findings of the investigators preceding that period.”

“Are there more mediums than there were formerly? Or, is that impression due to the fact that as soon as one develops it is known, as a result of the greater interest and the report of such cases by the various societies for Psychological Research?”

“There seems to be an increasing interest, but very few tested cases. In America we have, as well known and outstanding examples; Mrs. Crandon (‘Margery’), Mrs. John H. Curran,* George Valiantine, Mrs. Burling, Mrs. Wreidt and Mrs. Estelle White. In England we have the outstanding Lewis Powell and Mrs. Leonard. Then there is Frau Silbert, the Schneider brothers and hosts of lesser lights.

“In Italy Marquis Carlo Scotto, with a very unusual group at Genoa, is producing remarkable phenomena. The Marquis, judging from such reports as have been made, is

. *Mrs. Curran does not produce ectoplasm; but the material originating from her pen stands on its own merit.

a remarkable voice medium. A quite unusual thing in connection with this group seems to be the production of independent voices almost at once, with practically no development period."

"You say this medium is a Marquis, a nobleman. How did such a man become interested?" interrupted Huntington.

"I am not familiar with the details of his mediumship, but from what I have heard, it seems to have been a direct result of the death of the eldest son of the 'House of Scott.*' The Marquis, being very sad and depressed, was advised by a friend to read 'Toward the Stars,' by Dennis Bradley. He procured the book and became anxious to try communication with his son. Through Valiantine he was able to converse with his son freely in Italian.** After a few sittings the Marquis was forced to return to Genoa. He asked some friends to sit with him and try for the direct voice in his own home. Not only was an independent voice developed almost at once, but the group combination seemed to be such that enormous amounts of ectoplasm were possible of production. It is my belief that much will be heard from this group.

"Another thing of interest in the report of the study of this group is the large number of rather unusual types of phenomena produced at an early period in its development. For example: flex-a-tone,*** moving about the room accompanying a gramophone in a wonderful manner. Currents of both hot and cold air were very marked preceding production of phenomena.

"Pet dogs materialized so that their whine could be distinctly heard. Visitors from the invisible side of life inscribed their signatures in a large register placed in the

*Reported in *Psychic Science*—Vol. VII, No. 4.

**Valiantine does not speak the language.

***Musical instrument in which strips of steel are struck at varying tensions.

circle for their convenience. Communicators spoke in Latin, Italian, Spanish.

"Much of their success seems to be due to the unusual vital force of the medium combined with a most unusual group, also to a wonderful guiding control 'Cresto D'Angelo.' When a member of the group violates a rule, he is instantly there to correct it with such orders as, 'Put your legs in their proper position,' or 'Unclasp your hands.' Everything, even in the total darkness of the sitting, seems to be under his observation and control. His ability to read the mind of any sitter and anticipate questions or ideas is said to be remarkable."*

"Has Valiantine been investigated?" Ned asked.

"Yes. By the British College and also by the Psychic Headquarters in New York City. As I recall the story, it is this: In the presence of Valiantine voices were produced which spoke in English, Italian, French, Portuguese, Spanish and occasionally a voice which spoke a language which none present could identify, but which was assumed to be a foreign language of oriental origin. One of the sitters present suggested inviting someone familiar with ancient languages. Dr. Whymant, a scholar of much experience in teaching and studying Chinese, was invited to listen to the voice. He knew how difficult it was to teach the correct pronunciation of the first syllable of the name of Confucius in Chinese, as the language is divided into many dialects. The voice present in Valiantine's sitting spoke in Mandarin. The owner of it claimed to be Confucius and was able to give the correct name of that master-philosopher 'K'ung,' its proper pronunciation. These peculiar characteristics of the voice caught the doctor's interest. The voice was asked to explain an error which existed in a certain passage. In response to this the voice not only recited the passage, in full as it stands in the present standard edition of the works of

*This ability has been noticed in many guides.

Confucius, but recited it as it was in the original. Thus, an error which had existed 2,400 years was corrected, apparently to Dr. Whyment's satisfaction. The reading in question, which had never seemed to convey meaning, was a phrase in 'Shih king' or 'Classic of Poetry,' assembled and edited by Confucius. It is recorded that the voice gave these lines meaning and made them intelligible.

"The net result of years of hard work on the part of a hundred or more scholars had been the determination of the sounds of twelve Chinese words of the time of Confucius. The medium, in this case, being an American mechanic makes the episode the more startling."

There was silence for a space.

"Since you have been telling me of your experiences I have been doing some reading along these lines," Ned stated. "There seems to be a great deal of confusion due apparently to the lack of any definite distinction between various types and degrees of mediumship. It is too late to start on that tonight, but I should like to discuss that phase of the subject at the first opportunity offered."

Ned had risen and was preparing to leave.

"You are acquainted with Dr. Noel. I have asked him over for Tuesday evening. Make notes of questions as they occur to you and we can discuss them at that time," suggested Burton. "Noel is not only interested, but contributes a new viewpoint to our discussions."

"I'll do that. Good-night."

CHAPTER VII

TWO days later Huntington called to return a book. "There were some questions this suggested to me. First, as I understand it, all mediums cannot, or at least do not, lay claim to an ability to see the departed. Some, however, seem to have that as their only gift. Is that correct?"

"You refer, of course, to what is called clairvoyance," said Burton, "the ability to see people who are no longer in this phase of life."

"As I understand it, this type of phenomena does not require an entranced medium. Those who possess the gift simply see people who are invisible to ordinary mortals, or else," added Huntington with a grin, "they are remarkably clever guessers."

Bob Burton continued, "There are frauds who pose as clairvoyants; sometimes they guess, but more often they have received the information in advance. In another class are those who are able to do mind reading. They can tell you things about your past with astounding accuracy. Yet these are not genuine clairvoyants. They obtain the information through contact with your subconscious mind. Many persons in this class cannot be accused of intentional fraud for they are quite sincere in their belief that they have mediumistic powers. The true clairvoyant, apparently, sees and hears the disembodied."

"Tell me," asked Ned, sincerely, "do you know of any instances of this alleged perception of the invisible that you feel are authentic?"

"I have heard of one that is most interesting,—an episode that took place in Boston. It was during the period

when our troops were being demobilized following the World War.

"A young lady, employed in a government office to fill out records of the men being discharged from service, was the principal. At the end of the day, the number of records turned in by this girl exceeded the number of men who had passed her desk. Questions followed. The officials showed her records made out for men who were known to have been killed in action. Her only response to kindly questions was a burst of tears, and the distraught reply that the men bothered her so much that she could not sleep well and was always tired and nervous. She persisted in the conviction that she had only filled out record sheets for the men who came up to her desk. The officials decided that her appearance gave the impression of poor health and she was advised to take a rest.

"Impressed by the affair, a government official described it that evening to a group of friends at his club. Among this group was a man of scientific mind, who secured the young lady's address, then proceeded with an assistant to visit her home.

"Persuading her that they had come to help was no easy task for she was inclined to be hysterical. In the end, however, she consented to answer their questions.

"'You can see and hear these men? They answered your questions?' asked the investigators.

"'Yes, they bother me all the time and seem anxious that I should understand something very important, but I can't get it,' she told them tearfully.

"'Are any of them with you now?' inquired her visitors.

"'Yes, three came up the path from the gate with you.'

"'Where are they? Can you point them out to us?'

The young woman indicated the supposed position of the unseen companions.

"Now this investigator had a theory and had come prepared to test it. A camera fitted with a quartz lens had been brought as part of his equipment. You know, of course, that ultra-violet rays, or rays having the characteristic of ultra-violet, will pass through quartz but are blocked out when ordinary lead glass—such as the lens in your eye glass—is used.

"Well," Burton went on, "the camera was directed at the points indicated as the position of the invisible soldiers. Several pictures were taken. Then the investigator produced a pair of frames, such as those used by opticians in testing vision. Next the young woman was requested to look at the soldiers while two quartz lenses were inserted in the frames before her eyes.

" 'Can you see them now?' queried the investigator.

" 'Yes.'

"Lead lenses were substituted for the quartz and the question repeated.

" 'No,' she replied.

"They exchanged and concealed the various lenses all to no avail. She could see them only with her naked eyes and with the quartz lenses. Despite various attempts they were unable to catch her in any false statements."

" 'Couldn't she have been a mind reader?' broke in Huntington. "There was no way of checking her statements because none of the others could see the soldiers she said were there."

"The investigator had foreseen just such a contingency and was prepared to furnish a positive check from his side of the experiment."

"How?"

"It seems there is a paint which reflects ultra-violet rays and is ordinarily invisible. A card with this paint on it was produced and placed at some distance from the girl and the quartz and lead lenses interchanged. She could

read the card when the quartz lenses were in the frames—she could not even see it when the frames contained lead glasses.”

“How did the pictures come out?”

“I have been told that in each case the pictures showed the soldiers in recognizable outline. They were taken with the quartz lens, of course.”

“What does this experiment explain regarding clairvoyance?” questioned Ned.

“The investigator contended that clairvoyance was a matter of super-vision on the part of the medium. Also, that the image seen clairvoyantly was vibrating at a speed similar to that of ultra-violet rays. If this is true, then a clairvoyant is one whose eyes can detect and record light rays vibrating at a much greater speed than those visible to the average eye. This is one hypothesis of clairvoyance.

“You said this government employe in Boston could hear the soldiers speaking to her,” remarked Huntington after a pause. “Have you any explanation for that?”

“The young lady was also clairaudent. In other words, her sense of hearing was tuned to register sound waves beyond the usual range.”

“Are clairvoyants born that way or do these qualities result from a peculiar development on the part of some people?”

“Some are undoubtedly born with ability to register higher vibrations. You know, children often play with invisible playmates, but parents and adults are peculiarly devoid of imaginative appreciation and the gift fades away in most cases.”

“Humph. Have you ever had personal contact with a good clairvoyant? To me, that would be quite evidential.”

“Yes, I have. In fact I had the experience of watching one develop. A young man of our acquaintance became in-

terested in psychical research and asked to sit with our group. After four or five sittings he reported seeing masses of luminous material which he described as similar to clouds of smoke. These, he said, would eddy and move, sometimes becoming quite large and at other times seeming to condense. At about the seventh sitting, he beheld one of these light masses suddenly condense and outline itself as a face. The effect upon him was so startling that we had all we could do to persuade him to continue with the sittings. Although frightened, he persisted, and in a very short time was able to see and describe various people as though they were present in human form. Many of these were persons whom he had never seen in his life, but were known to others of the group."

"These clairvoyants," broke in Huntington impetuously, "seem only to see people under certain conditions. Why is that? You would expect them to see hosts of the dead at all times."

"The answer, I believe, is to be found in your friends, the vibrations," replied Bob.

They sat in silence for some time. Then Ned drew a small folded paper from his pocket and after glancing at it said, "Another question I have noted here is this: just what distinction is there between the various types of mediums?"

Bob was silent for a space, then settled back in his chair.

"That is a big order. There are many grades of mediumship; but for the purpose of our discussion we may classify them under two main headings. Under the heading of psychic let us group for our purpose all types of sensitives including clairvoyants, and contrast them with mediums. Under this latter heading we shall include the individuals in whose presence ectoplasm is produced and manifested.

"I would rather not go into this tonight but I will get together some data on the subject and go over it with you and Dr. Noel tomorrow evening.

"In the meantime, I will say that according to our eth-
eric friends, everything in this world of ours seems to have
its counterpart in the invisible world. Very likely it exists
there first and is reproduced here later. As we have certain
persons called "mediums" who can give off ectoplasm which
can be used for purposes of materialization, so there is
psychoplasm, produced in some manner in the spirit world
as a counterpart of ectoplasm. By making use of it those
no longer clothed in physical expression can make them-
selves visible to a clairvoyant. In fact, I have been told
that mediums on the other side of the veil are as essential
to communication as they are on this side."

"These highly technical terms, such as psychoplasm and
ectoplasm, seem more confusing than explanatory."

"Every line of endeavor develops its own nomenclature,
words framed, by those interested in it, to express phases or
parts of the subject. Psychical research is no exception to
the rule."

"I am glad you brought that up. No, spiritism and
The Society for Psychical Research are quite distinct."

"I am glad you brought that up. No. Spiritism and
The Society for Psychical Research are quite distinct."

"Many of the men and women of science and intellect
who constitute the Society, which was founded in 1882,
have not become entirely convinced of Spiritism. Their aim
has been to create an organization which would sympatheti-
cally investigate various types of phenomena such as clair-
voyance, materializations, thought-transference and events
that occur in connection with death. Automatic writing,
trance-speaking and other phases have appealed to these
people as worthy of honest, open-minded study. They have
sought to proceed scientifically."

"You must understand that the one aim of the psychi-
cal investigator is to accumulate accurate facts on these

subjects. The Society has no connection with Spiritualism, no religious affiliations. Any one may become a member, and have the benefit of the records and reports. You and I know that many people have a way of brushing aside the intangible and the unseen merely because they are hard to grasp and understand. Others are carried to extremes by their emotions. A safe ground is the sane, practical, middle course where patient, methodical, open-minded inquiry results. When knowledge of what we call the soul, or psychic, shall be finally opened to us, it will come through science. The very people looked upon by many as the soul's enemies will prove its friends."

Ned pursed his lips and pondered.

"But look here. Surely the survival of personality does not solve the problem of life. How much better if we could get something that would shed light on this business of living. It is appalling how we underestimate our own potentialities in relation to life."

His eyes came to rest upon a corner of the room veiled in shadow, as though he half expected to find an answer to his question there.

"Would you like to discuss the question of life, and what it is all about, with one who claims to have a broader vision than that vouchsafed to us?"

"Just what do you mean?"

"There is a trance medium, a Mr. Elm, of Buffalo, who is controlled by a spirit calling himself, 'Samuel,' who claims to have left this life over a hundred years ago. Possibly he might enlighten you."

"And you can hear his voice?"

"Mr. Elm is a dependent voice medium. That is, he goes into trance and while he is quite unconscious 'Samuel' speaks, using the medium's vocal cords. The sound comes from Elm's mouth. This to me is the least convincing type

of mediumship, as it is difficult to decide whether messages come through the medium or from the medium."

"And what is the explanation for this type of mediumship?"

"Why not let 'Samuel' tell you all about it, himself? Let me arrange a meeting with him for some time next week. The idea occurred to me when you called the other evening and expressed an interest. Meanwhile, perhaps you'd be interested to know what started psychical research, and how such an institution as the Spiritualist Church came into being."

"I want all the facts I can get," smiled Huntington. "Let's hear it."

"The early history of Spiritualist movement will help you to make a distinction between the two groups in the field of psychics, namely, the psychic researchers and the spiritualists.

"In 1844, Mr. and Mrs. John C. Bell, living in a small cottage at Hydesville, New York, were instrumental in creating dissention and controversy within the Empire State.

"A pedler called on the Bells; he was one of those early editions of the house-to-house salesmen who carried a large assortment of articles in a pack. In the course of events this man was invited to spend the night, which was not unusual in those times. The next day Mrs. Bell departed on a three day visit, taking with her a maid-of-all work, leaving her husband to keep house. Meantime the pedler returned for a second night's lodging. He never was seen again. Months passed and the cottage was vacated by the Bells. New tenants arrived. They soon found themselves disturbed by noises and rappings. These were attributed to practical jokers among the neighbors or their children. The nuisance increased and, failing to discover the perpetrators, the new tenants vacated the premises. Again the 'For Rent' sign was hung out.

“And now the Fox family consisting of John, his wife and daughters moved into the cottage. Soon their nights began to be disturbed by sounds of walking. Articles were hurled about the kitchen. Raps and poundings were heard all over the place. Efforts to discover the causes seemed to result only in an increase of the disturbance. Naturally the matter became the subject of discussion among the neighbors. Many came to listen and poke around the ‘haunted house.’

“It was in 1848,—just four years after the pedler disappeared that Kate Fox made a startling discovery. She found that the raps could answer questions, by means of a simple code, one rap for no, three raps for yes, and two for I do not know.

“In this way, with the addition of one detail at a time, the story was unfolded. The raps were represented to be made by one who claimed to be a spirit. He had been a pedler who accepted hospitality beneath that roof and Bell, his host, had murdered him for the five hundred dollars he carried on his person.

“Naturally, great excitement followed the discovery. Neighbors gathered, every day, about the cottage gate to ask questions and have them answered by the rappings. Upon receiving apparently intelligent replies they went away bewildered and incredulous while the Fox family was subjected to all sorts of speculation and accusation.

“The rappings continued and from these it was possible to complete the story, to the effect that the pedler’s body was buried in the cellar of the cottage together with his rifled pack.

“Here was an opportunity to disprove the entire episode and establish the absurdity of believing, even for a moment, that the spirits of the dead could rap out on the walls absurd tales of murder and theft. The cellar bottom

was promptly dug up and a few bones were found. Some insisted they were human, others denied it.

"Both the raps and the Fox family gradually lost the public interest. The family moved into new quarters, but to their astonishment the raps followed them. They occurred, apparently, wherever the Fox girls were.

"Fifty-six years passed after the story of the pedler and his murder was revealed through these weird rappings on the wall, purporting to be produced by his spirit.

"In 1904 a false wall built across the cellar of this 'haunted house,' about one yard from its real east wall, crumbled and fell. Repairs were begun, and in the space exposed during reconstruction, the skeleton of the pedler and his pack was discovered.

"Naturally excitement followed. The curious, the thoughtful, the incredulous, the inquiring,—all focused their attention once more upon the humble cottage in Hydesville and its strange story. Horace Greeley, editor of the New York Tribune, and other men of outstanding reputation were disposed to accept the story as true. Vigorous denials followed stormy scenes at public gatherings, abuse by skeptics . . . ridicule. Thousands rushed to the scene to appease a burning curiosity.

"Suddenly America gave birth to a veritable host of so-called mediums. Kate Fox and her sister toured the country giving demonstrations of the rappings. Kate began accepting money for sittings and eventually became an alcoholic. All manner of people took up communication between the living and the departed. A horde of imposters seized this opportunity to fatten their purses upon the public's credulity. An avalanche of fanaticism, deception and superstition, some of which persists to this day, swept across the country.

"The fact remains that the phenomena were apparently true. Reports concerning them spread to England. The London Dialectical Society, after prolonged experiments and

examinations, reported them as having actually occurred. Howls of derision from the entire press of two continents followed.

“Next Sir William Crookes, English physicist of outstanding reputation, began to investigate psychic phenomena. He gave a great deal of time and energy to the study of phenomena developed in the presence of mediums.

“A great volume of priceless information was gathered and tabulated by this conscientious investigator, all in the face of criticism, abuse and ridicule. The records of these observations were burned by a member of his own family the day after Sir William’s entrance into the realm of the beyond.

“According to Dr. Alfred R. Wallace* the phenomena reported by Crookes actually occurred and were genuine psychic manifestations. The public accepted the contrary statements of the press and for the vast majority the subject was thus disposed of.

“Small groups however, were formed for private study. Larger ones embraced what they called spiritualism. Soon the movement had assumed such dimensions that men of science undertook to examine it seriously.

“Not being convinced of the reality of the phenomena, but feeling that their production constituted a challenge to all true scientists, such men as Sedgwick of Cambridge, Sir William Barrett, Lord Tennyson, Lord Raleigh and Professor Adams set up, what might be termed, the investigation group, as distinct from the Spiritualist group.

“M. Jean Meyer, a wealthy French land owner, who had received what, to him, was satisfactory evidence of survival, created by an endowment, in 1909; The International Metaphysic Institute, founded ‘for the study of dynamic

*English naturalist. His share in establishing the theory of evolution was acknowledged by Darwin.

and psychic powers, which seem to go beyond the sensorial and organic field.' This endowment made possible many illuminating investigations.

"The vast amount of material recorded in the proceedings of the American and English societies for psychical research gives tangible evidence of the work accomplished and the advance made. Today, there are no less than one hundred fifty-four journals devoted to the subject. The movement has become widespread."

The two friends had been so engrossed in the story of the origin of spiritualism and the consequent investigations, which were the initial moves toward psychic research, that they had lost all track of time. Vouchsafing a continuance of the discussion Ned made a reluctant departure.

CHAPTER VIII

THE study of subjective phenomena is open to even more discussion and controversy than that of the objective type. A vast field of possible explanations presents itself. For this reason Burton greeted Noel's arrival with obvious relief on the following night.

"I'm frankly out of my depth," he grinned. "Such notes as I have been able to gather call for deciphering by a mind better versed in psychology than my own. Ned, here, is not much help. I'll read them to you both; but we look to you, Noel, for a psychological explanation of them."

"Clairvoyance, means clear-seeing. It is necessary to distinguish between clairvoyants and those who receive communications or impressions from the minds of other people without using the recognized channels of the senses.* In the latter instance we're not concerned with how the transfer of thought, sight, or sensory impression takes place, because we are not sure that an actual transfer is involved.

"For the moment let us take the 'symptom' of mind-reading or thought-transference. The popular imagination has grasped the word 'telepathy' and is inclined to use it to explain all the more obscure occurrences in the field of psychic research, very much as it has used the word unconscious or subconscious** to explain the more unintelligible events in the field of psychology.

"In clairvoyance we have two main types,—'induced,' and what might be termed 'pure.' The 'induced' type de-

*Telepathy.

**Definition of subconscious mind attributes would seem to endow it with all those characteristics essential for survival.

pend upon an object such as a crystal to act as a stimulus. The 'pure' clairvoyant apparently has access to a broader field of information regarding the past and, to some extent, the future.

"Investigators seem to have approached this field of study, each through the channel of his or her own particular hobby. They all seek to reduce the evidence gathered to some principle or theory, one to telepathy, another to the idea that all accumulated experiences of the race are held in what might be termed a 'reservoir' of group experience into which the clairvoyant is able to dip for the facts required.

"That the 'pure' psychic can assist in recovering lost property, seems to be established by records. In the 'American Journal of Psychical Research' June, 1925, for example, an article by Stanley DeBrath, 'Psycho-Cognition,' gives excellent examples of this sort of thing. One case is described, where a psychic was handed part of a letter written by a young woman to her fiance. The psychic knew neither the person nor the handwriting. She said, 'This young woman is imperious, overbearing and devoured by pride and ambition. It would be well to distrust her gentle and graceful manners. She constantly twists the truth and has no scruples in accusing others to clear herself.'

"The man engaged to the lady thus described, refused to believe a word of this. Later he made cautious inquiries, and found that she had been divorced after shooting and wounding a former husband and was at the time engaged to two other men with a view to marrying the richer.

"In the same article a record of recovery of lost property is also given. A lady visiting in Paris had missed a very valuable diamond brooch. The clairvoyant was handed one of her gloves and was asked to give information about the matter which was troubling the owner. Said the clair-

voyant, 'She is distracted about the loss of something—a large jewel, shining and valuable. It is not lost, it is hidden and will be restored. I follow this lady as she leaves her home, in an automobile, with another person. She goes to a town near here. She visits three houses. The jewel has fallen near one of them. I see it picked up by a woman, young, very stout, with light eyes and hair. The jewel has been locked up; she thought of keeping it but is afraid—she will restore it before the week is out. No police measures should be taken. She will give it back.'

"The lady to whom the jewel belonged was notified four days later that the jewel was in the hands of the Mayor of Versailles; the sister of a workman had picked it up and turned it over to him."

"That's most amazing," Huntington interrupted.

"It is similar to the work of the French psychic, Mme. Morel," continued Burton. "There is a description of some of her work in the 'Journal.' The gentleman working with her happened to hear a Belgian refugee express fear concerning papers and other valuables he had been forced to hide when the Germans were advancing. The refugee was asked to loan something of a personal nature which could be handed to the psychic with the hope of receiving some information.

"A small knot of ribbon from the inside of the refugee's hat was handed the psychic. She said she saw him much disturbed—saw him go down into a cellar by stone stairs. She gave the number of steps in the stairs. She also stated that she saw him place a packet containing valuables and gold in a wall, where he had dug a hole, by the light of a candle. She saw him close up the wall after placing the packet therein. When asked about the safety of the articles thus hidden she stated that she saw other hands searching but she saw the original owner happy in the possession of his valuables.

"After the armistice the refugee returned to his home. A letter received from him later stated that the cellar had

most certainly been searched, but not the wall, where he found all he had hidden."

"The facts you've given in the examples so far, Bob, were known to one or more living persons and might easily have been obtained by the clairvoyant through other than the psychic channels," objected Dr. Noel.

"True, but here is one of more convincing character.

"An old man had disappeared from his French estate. Some weeks later a scarf belonging to him was placed in the hands of a psychic. The man who brought it to her knew nothing about the case, except that the estate covered 2750 acres of woodland, and the further fact that the missing man was about 82 years old and stooped as he walked.

"The psychic at once described the person who brought the scarf to her and then the daughter-in-law of the lost man who had secured it from among his belongings, then the owner—the lost man himself.

"Now here is the part that impressed me. The psychic described the man as lying on the ground, dead; the ground very damp and near the water. She described him leaving the country home, walking down a path into the woods, becoming ill, falling to the ground. Then she described the man, as he was lying on the ground near the water,—his bald head, long nose, white hair about the ears, his coat, shirt and tie. She said that he was lying on his right side, one leg bent under him, near blocks of stone. The blocks of stone turned out to be stumps of trees which, covered with moss, looked like boulders."

"And did all that check up, when he was found?" queried Ned.

"Absolutely. As I recall it, three attempts were made before the body was discovered. So there is a case where facts could not have been in anyone's mind."

"Nevertheless," Noel cut in, "there is plenty in that story which still requires explanation."

"Granted." Burton smiled. "But there are many cases reported by Dr. Eugene Osty, in his 'Supernormal Faculties of Man.' Some cases of medical diagnosis are also given. His method of experimentation is described in the article with such detail and exactness that you feel nothing has been overlooked—not a possible loop-hole left."

"In the instances of clairvoyance just cited there was no claim regarding spirit control. They are apparently cases of psychic power. No doubt all of us possess it to some extent, although not all of us are mediums."

"Just what is the distinction between a psychic and a medium, Bob?" Ned asked. "You spoke of that the other evening."

"I have an article by E. E. Dudley, in the 'American Journal for Psychical Research.' He seems to feel there is a marked distinction between the two."

As Burton moved toward the bookcase Ned directed a question to Noel.

"Has modern science offered any evidence that the force which motivates the mind cannot survive the body?"

Noel smiled.

"When we turn to psychology, the question arises as to whether the mind and soul are dependent upon the body or relatively distinct from it. We might hold the view, that, although the subconscious mind may have developed out of simpler forms of biological processes, it gradually achieves an increasing degree of independence and is able to react upon the body with increasing freedom and eventually survive physical death."

Burton returned to the group.

"Let me summarize for you the main points of differentiation made between psychics and mediums. I have them marked. Dudley points out first, that the current discussion about spirit hypothesis would be clarified if it were more thoroughly understood and conceded by the spiritistic

school that a goodly proportion of the phenomena which pass as mediumistic are in fact the product of forces resident in the subconscious minds of living men. He feels these powers to be within the field of research, and properly called 'psychic,' but that they have no real connection with any future existence or any world of spirits or survival of personality; that much of the research in this field indicates that the powers dealt with are present in the so-called medium's mind. They seem to be unidentified and unformulated powers, and all beyond our present understanding as to their normal character. None-the-less they are exclusively a part of the operator's mental equipment. He asks the reader to assume that the energies observed are fourth dimensional. He expresses his opinion as follows:

" 'As far as we know, no change can take place in our three dimensional world of matter except by the addition, subtraction, or transformation of energy. Withdraw the fourth component, energy, and our three-dimensional universe, as such, would disappear. The mind, in this sense, might be regarded as the fifth dimension or principle element in our psychic equation, since we find it infused into and controlling energy in the various manifestations of objective psychic phenomena.'

" 'Unless mental action has some effect on psychic matter, we may be running ahead of our evidence—but it is a convenient analogy for use in this discussion of the subject.

" 'The energy link seems to be essential to the chain through which mind controls matters in our normal bodily activities. The production of psychic photographs, seance room phenomena such as the discharge of an electroscope or movement of a compass needle, the drop in temperature of the seance room air, seem other examples of the responsiveness of certain energies to mind control. Before this link can be extended to include telepathy, the tracing of lost persons or objects, and the knowledge of the past or the future when facts related are unknown to any living person, extensive study must be completed.'

"The distinction between the medium and the psychic is made on the basis that ectoplasm, teleplasms or telekinetic phenomena are produced in the presence of the first

and not in the presence of the second. After remarking that it is quite generally agreed that certain so-called 'supernormal'* psychic powers are the possession of all people but in varying degrees of development, he points out the fact that the psychics' contacts produce reactions which vary from vague intuitions, or feelings, such as dislike unaccompanied by any obvious reasons, to the ability to see and describe the past life of an individual as clearly as we see the episodes in a moving picture play. Such psychics can often contact our memories of the dead, or absent friend, and describe them in such detail as to suggest the actual presence of that person. The range of their ability may dip into the entire universe of facts.

"Dudley defines a psychometric clairvoyant as one who uses a physical link of some sort in contacting the person about whom information is sought.** A telepathic clairvoyant is one who makes a similar contact by some non-physical link; one who relies upon fears, desires and other emotional reactions present in the sitters' minds.*** The idea received is often translated into a visual hallucination. A case is cited to bear out this contention. He describes a woman who claimed to have Shakespeare as a guide and a teacher.

"The wish to have her imaginary guide a reality was so strong that when she went to one of these psychics he saw Shakespeare and described the thoughts she had regarding his position in her life. This is a mistake a telepathic clairvoyant might easily make; but never the genuine direct-voice medium who has nothing to do with the voice or messages which occur in his or her presence.

*The word supernormal seems to have caused much confusion. The future study of this subject will prove that the advanced phases of psychics are normal, though not yet understood.

**Cards, notes, articles, belonging to or having been handled by a person act as stimuli.

***About 90% of the so-called messages seem to deal directly with these emotional states.

"Then follows a description of what is termed a 'paranoid personality.' One who is neither medium nor psychic, but who, apparently, creates such strong mental pictures of the spirit 'controls'—as a rule historic figures—that when in the presence of certain sensitives, they see and describe these spirits as though they were actually present. Sometimes they receive messages from them. In a case Dudley studied personally for five years, the 'medium' had surrounded herself with a group of guides such as Abraham Lincoln, Joan of Arc and many other notables of history. She organized a developing circle for 'mediums' which seems to have turned out a number of persons who saw and heard spirits. These spirits gave lengthy discourses on all manner of topics. It is significant, however, that the knowledge they imparted never exceeded that of the so-called medium.

"Dudley does not accuse these people of deliberate fraud. He suggests that they are victims of a system that exalts the possession of a vivid imagination into the class of 'gifts' from the spirit. All forms of physical mediumship are looked down upon by them as unspiritual. This seems to be the attitude of their imaginary 'controls' who show the utmost contempt for the 'earthly' or 'low' type of spirit that descends to physical means of functioning. Here is the way this development is described by the author:

"These psychics have made themselves sensitive to impressions and thoughts of others and can contact the sitters' memory and circumstances of their youth, revive and describe in beautiful language half-remembered thoughts and long cherished opinions; give the names of, and describe absent friends with the same degree of accuracy with which they are defined and represented in the mind and memory of the sitters'."

"That might explain the experiences of several friends of mine who have complained that messages received through alleged mediums were disappointing and often inaccurate," remarked Noel.

"It certainly explains many of the cases of 'advertising psychics.' They become mediums when they discover how easily a small amount of real ability can be mixed with a large amount of padding, and the whole passed off as spiritual messages."

"I have known that type to probe for facts while they covered up by repeatedly asking if I understood," said Noel with a frown. "They are the people who effectually halted my budding interest in this whole subject."

"I quite understand your reaction," replied Burton. "At first you are inclined to be amused, but when you realize the damage this sort of person is doing you are properly outraged."

"These mental mediums," put in Dr. Noel, "are apparently long on piety and short on science."

"In Dudley's opinion this type of pseudo medium has multiplied rapidly and has gained the advantage in numbers over the genuine. They have managed to convince their followers that physical mediumship* is coarse, vulgar and degrading compared with mental mediumship which refuses to meet the rigid tests applied to genuine mediums. Such tests they feel are 'blasphemy.' Their admiring and credulous friends feel the same way. As a result we have, in this country alone, thousands of persons calling themselves 'mediums' who are deliberately fraudulent, and thousands more who are unsuspecting victims of their own imagination. These, of course, refuse to be tested nor will they cooperate in any scientific investigation. Incidentally, since many of the early mediums had Indian 'controls' nearly all these psychics claim to have them."

Dr. Noel laughed.

"Why the merriment?" asked Huntington.

*Produces physical phenomena—ectoplasm.

"I went to a psychic once whose Indian 'control' must have been born within sight of the Thames, for he was certainly reckless in the use of his 'aitches'."

"Exactly, or you may find that the pretended Indian knows nothing about his racial customs or history," added Burton.

"How does the 'medium' get around that?" queried Ned.

"Well, those who will consent to make an explanation always have an alibi. Usually they claim the 'control' is an infant who had no knowledge of earth language, or that it is an ancient who died long ago. It is quite hopeless to check up on them.

"It is pointed out that all this class of 'controls' seem to develop a surprising command of the medium's language, and are strictly limited to his or her vocabulary and general knowledge.

"There," said Burton, handing the 'Journal' to Dr. Noel, "is the entire article. It should be read by every intelligent person who is interested in the subject of psychic research."

"I am convinced that one thing should always be born in mind," remarked Noel. "Mediumistic and psychic powers cannot be studied apart from the principles of psychology."

"Bob told me a story of taking the picture of a spirit in Boston. I should like to hear more about psychic photography." Ned was obviously intrigued.

"Mr. Elm will be here tomorrow night and, if you two will come early, I will give you what information I have on psychic photographs, before his arrival," Burton promised.

CHAPTER IX

IT was the evening the Buffalo medium was due at the Burtons.

Huntington and Dr. Noel had arrived early so that they could explore Burton's material on psychic photographs.

"There is very little on this subject that seems to have the proper background," lamented Burton, "but here are such descriptions as I have gathered, plus the experience of some people known to me personally.

"To my mind a psychic photograph, made under absolute test conditions, would go a long way in proving survival," ventured Dr. Noel.

"It would seem so," replied Burton. "Yet the only work I know of that even approaches the requirements you mention is carried on in Crewe, England. Dr. and Mrs. Cranndon were there and returned with pictures showing several 'extras' who were identified."

"Have any other people met with like success?"

"I know a Mr. Whitney and his wife who sat at the home of Mrs. Buxton in Crewe. A Mr. Hope, Mrs. Buxton, the medium, and my friends sat around a small table. The visitors had purchased a package containing six photographic plates and this was placed on the table. Music was played for a short time. Mrs. Buxton took the package of plates between her hands, then Mr. Hope placed one hand on top of hers, above the package, and the other under her hand which was below the package. Mr. Whitney and his wife did likewise. Thus there were four right hands above the package and four left hands below it. My friends were instructed to think of the departed, whose image they were anxious to get.

"Mr. Whitney now took charge of the package of plates and accompanied Mr. Hope to the dark room. There, under red light, the package was opened. Mr. Whitney signed three of the six plates and they were placed in plate holders. The remaining three plates were wrapped in the original package and retained by him. The plate holders were also in the possession of my friend and taken by him from the dark room to the studio. A holder was inserted in the camera, Mr. Hope, holding one hand on the camera, took one of Mrs. Buxton's hands with his other hand. An exposure of ten seconds was made with each plate. My friend carried them back to the dark room. On the second plate developed was an 'extra' head. This was positively identified by scores of friends as the father of Mrs. Whitney. The other two plates had smoky effects but no clear cut 'extras.'

"Should the theory prove correct, that lead glass will not allow the impression on the plate of matter having the same vibratory speed as ultra-violet, then such extras as were obtained must have been impressed upon the plate while held between the medium's hands and the only object served by exposing the plate was to impose the impression of the Whitneys," concluded Burton.

"When you say 'extra' you mean a spirit face?" inquired Huntington.

"Exactly—but in some cases it is a whole figure; in others, a head is enclosed by a mass of ectoplasm, which forms a hood-like effect around the 'extra' head, or part of it, as the case may be.

" 'A spirit photographer' by the name of Moss who was exposed at Birmingham, England, had apparently made a practice of copying pictures of persons from old newspapers and magazines. Yet, about one out of every three seems to have been recognized by the various sitters as deceased relatives. The desire to believe, on the part of certain types of people whose emotions completely smother such reason as they might employ, allows the fake mediums

to thrive. They have been the curse of psychical research and a tremendous hindrance to the proper study of real phenomena.

“Psychic photographs of a different nature have been obtained by Dr. Hamilton of Winnipeg in studying a group in that city. His method is quite distinct from that employed at Crewe. Eight 5 x 7 cameras and two stereoscopic cameras are focused upon the medium. These are equipped with various lenses: one Seneca portrait, three rapid rectilinear, one wide-angle, one Doppel, two quartz, one Wollensack stereo, and one stereo Goerz.

“After eight years work, in 1928, a new guide appeared upon the scene, apparently with the consent of those already working with the circle. The new control requested that a bell-box, similar to that used in the Margery group, be constructed. Using this as a means of giving signals, he then arranged for the pictures, saying that when he rang the bell they were to take a flashlight of the medium. The plates showed ectoplasmic masses formed around the medium's eyes and mouth. In the center of these masses, there were as many as five small miniature heads, generally full face. All of these were identified.

“Such results remove the possibility of the impression being made upon the plate while held between the hands of the medium. The plates were handled only in placing them in holders and removing them. This case seems to be a recording through the lenses of the cameras only. It involves ectoplasmic production, however, and that is a tangible substance.”

At this point Burton saw fit to assert, “There are certain people who seem to feel that the phenomena produced in the seance room cannot be duplicated by normal means. Yet, nearly all of them can be simulated, though not under the same conditions.”

“Just what do you mean by that,” asked Ned.

"The making of 'psychic gloves,' for example, has been duplicated under normal conditions by R. J. Tillyard, an experienced and competent psychic investigator. In a paper read at the National Laboratory, November 22, 1927, he says:

'It is impossible for all supporters of the hypothesis that all psychic phenomena are produced by fraud, to prove the categorical negative which they are always asserting, namely, that the production of supernormal phenomena is an impossibility. If a normal method of producing a given phenomena can be shown to exist, then other things being equal, this explanation must be accepted in preference to a supernormal one. The supernormal mode of production can only be given credence in so far as the conditions of the experiment preclude the production of the particular phenomena by normal means.'

"He also pointed out that it is equally foolish for believers in supernormal production to claim that a given phenomena cannot be produced by normal means. He then gave directions for producing 'psychic gloves'."

"What in the world do you mean by 'psychic gloves'?"

"Several cases are on record, where, by using the ectoplasm given off by the medium, the disembodied have produced materialized hands. These they dipped in melted wax, and then by dematerializing the hands they were able to remove them from the wax. Some of these 'gloves' have been rather remarkable, especially where two hands, with the fingers interlocked, have been produced.

"Tillyard showed that by placing a tourniquet about the wrist and slowing the return flow of blood from the hand, the hand would become swollen. Then by covering the swollen hand with glycerine and dipping it in wax a glove coating would form over the hand. Removing the tourniquet—allowing the hand to return to normal size by holding it high over the head—it would be withdrawn leaving a perfect mould. The wrist opening was large, but could be closed before the wax had entirely hardened."

"Have they ever used rubber gloves to make these wax casts?"

"Yes, but the absence of thumb prints and other markings would not fail to be noted by an investigator. Casts made by the medium's own hand would in all probability leave some of the hairs from his hand in the cast, and human hairs would be hard to explain. It was the production of a cast by 'Walter,' Margery's control, that started the Crandons on the thumb print experiments.

"Another startling type of psychic manifestation described by a number of investigators is what has been termed 'apports.' The mechanism back of their production seems to be an ability on the part of certain 'controls' to dematerialize matter, and in the dematerialized state to pass it through other matter, such as walls, ceilings or floors and then rematerialize it after the passing-through process.

"What in the world are you talking about?" demanded Ned with a laugh.

"It does savor of black magic." Burton smiled. "I can't blame you for scoffing. It does sound wholly incredible, but I can assure you that this particular phenomena is vouched for by many dependable investigators. A typical 'apport' is the appearance, in a room where you know there were no flowers, of a flowering plant with the fresh dirt clinging to the roots. This has been done where there was no possible means of ingress."

Huntington made a gesture of despair. "It's too deep for me."

"Do all mediums do this sort of thing?" asked Dr. Noel.

"Apparently not, for I can only find a few reported. Herr Melzer of Dresden, has a reputation along this line. Whereas, most 'apport' mediums sit in the dark, he sits in white or red light and produces many kinds of flowers; lilies-of-the-valley, roses, violets, which seem to come out of

the air. Here is a description given by a reporter for the London Daily News, October 23, 1926:

'There is no warning of their coming, except the increasing excitement of the medium. The object often appears coming toward the medium.

The light from a number of shaded electric lamps was strong enough to permit small type to be read easily—and every movement of both sitters and medium could be observed. Suddenly, after jumping violently in his chair, the medium stooped and lifted a bunch of lilies-of-the-valley complete with roots and earth in his hand. The medium made no objection to any precautions taken.'

"In the famous circle at Genoa, Mme. Rossi,* who appears to add greatly to that circle's work, is normal and conscious during the advent of the 'apports,' but feels great alarm. Her arms and body are shaken by convulsive vibrations. The larger the object the more marked the symptoms.

"There is a case, reported in psychic history, of a medium who was transported several city blocks. Disappearing from a room while in conversation with a woman friend, she is reported to have appeared very suddenly in the center of a group sitting a mile or more away. There is also a recent report from the Genoa group describing the removal of the medium from the seance room to a small grain room in the stable, three locked doors and the space from house to stable intervening.

"All researchers seem to sidestep reporting the fact of an 'apport.' To me, it seems only part and parcel of the wonderful things they do report. 'Apports' have occurred in the Crandon group repeatedly. In fact, it was my privilege to see an ancient and unusual piece of jewelry, an 'apport,' which was presented by 'Walter' to a relative. The entire history of psychic research contains descriptions of such happenings.

*Member of Marquis Carlo Scotto's group.

"It may be difficult for the coming generation to understand and explain the passage of matter through matter but that apparently must be one of their problems, for this generation is gathering many such facts that call for explanation."

"What is the general theory as to the means of transporting a solid through another substance of like characteristics?" inquired Ned.

"The theory is that 'solid' is a more or less relative term. You know that this table, the chairs upon which we are sitting and these walls which enclose us are made up of myriads of atoms separated by what we have termed, ether. Now, ether can pass through spaces occupied by itself. In other words, theoretically, if we were able to see these walls through a sufficiently powerful microscope, they would appear as mist or like banks of fog, through which it would be easy to pass a substance in gaseous form. Once through the wall it can be returned to its natural state."

"Levitations are wonderful enough. I shall be some time digesting that idea by itself," Noel remarked.

"Have you ever tried the old trick of lifting a person while holding your breath?" inquired Bob. "Carrington reports trying this out by placing a man in a chair upon the platform of a Toledo Scale. The four persons who were to do the lifting also stood upon the scale platform. A man who acted as recorder of weights watched the scale lever during the experiment. The combined weight of the group read 712 pounds. The four doing the lifting bent over in unison, letting out their breath, then straightened up in unison, taking a deep breath while so doing. On the fifth rising they placed their fingers under the edge of the chair and lifted the man as he sat in the chair. Old stuff; but the first time I ever heard of it tried on a scale. The recorder watching the lever arm reported a loss of weight of 52 pounds for the group during the first lift."

"In a test made with the medium Palladino, in 1892, she was placed upon a scale and under control showed a loss of 17 pounds, followed by a return to normal weight of 128 pounds. It is said that she had the ability to increase or decrease the weight of an object by holding her hand over it and willing the result desired. These effects carried to a greater extreme might result in levitation.

"Reviewing the records of such mediumships as Palladino, Holmes and Stainton Moses we find instances where mediums were levitated while under the rigid control of investigators."

"Church history has records of the levitation of Saints, such as St. Joseph and St. Teresa, has it not?" queried Noel.

Bob nodded and continued, "The cause of the levitation of a person would be an opposing force to that of gravity or the building of a screen of isolation between the person and the earth.

"There is an Oriental theory that the levitation of one's body can be accomplished by proper breathing. These breathing exercises are supposed to increase the flow through the body of what is termed 'prana' which neutralizes the pull of gravity."

Burton paused and Ned remarked, "'Apports,' levitations and all the rest seem quite trivial, of themselves,—even foolish. Yet they may be part of the great unexplained forces of life."

Dr. Noel smiled as he rejoined, "They might explain certain descriptions given in the Bible."

Burton nodded. "You will find a vast amount of new interest in that book if you read it with the findings of psychological research in mind." They were interrupted by the door bell, and a moment later Burton returned.

"I thought that was the medium but it was not. However, it might be well for me to tell you something about his type of mediumship and the man himself."

"About twelve years ago, as I understand it, Elm, who is a glove-cutter by trade, joined a spiritualistic developing class in Buffalo. He knew nothing about the work and was curious regarding its possibilities. On several occasions he became unconscious while in the group and, upon regaining consciousness, was told that he had been in trance and that during these periods of unconsciousness, invisible people had apparently taken possession of his body and conversed with the group. After some time he developed the ability to take on the condition of trance at his own pleasure.

"There is little more to tell except that 'Samuel,' the medium's control, is a self-styled teacher whose specialty seems to be what he terms 'natural philosophy.' Exactly what branch of philosophy is natural, you will be able to determine for yourself this evening."

"What do you know of this 'Samuel' person? What did he do while on earth? In what way is he fitted to be a teacher?" asked Ned with a puzzled expression.

"He claims to have been a Virginian planter, the owner of slaves, and somewhat of a student. I doubt if it was his knowledge which fitted him for teaching. As I understand it, anyone who is willing to allow the more advanced spirits to transmit their wisdom through him, has the necessary requirements of a teacher such as 'Samuel'."

"Do you know any method by which the dependent voice medium may be checked, so as to prove his genuineness?" Noel asked.

"Generally," said Burton frankly, "there is no way, but I feel fairly certain that the Elm mediumship is genuine. Last year it was my privilege to hear 'Walter' Mrs. Crandon's control, and 'Samuel' this man's control working in the same room at the same time.

"Not one of the thousands of the people who have investigated the 'Margery' mediumship have yet been able to disprove the genuineness of 'Walter.' 'Walter,' by working with 'Samuel' and conversing with him in my presence,

—to all intents and purposes accepts him as genuine—so I also accept him. You will be able to form your own judgment, largely upon the knowledge displayed by ‘Samuel,’ and decide whether it would, or would not, be reasonable to assume that Elm could give the replies and enter into the type of philosophical discussion that purports to emanate from the intelligence of ‘Samuel’ while using Elm’s body.”

Burton departed at this point to answer a second summons of the door bell and returned accompanied by a short stout man of about thirty, whose clothes and general appearance suggested a humble background. Huntington noted, as he was introduced to Elm, that the man’s hands were calloused as though from hard work. His embarrassment was noticeable. He seemed ill at ease during the greetings.

Breaking what promised to be an embarrassing situation for Elm, Burton suggested that they start the seance at once as Mr. Elm was forced to rise at an early hour on the morrow. The medium was seated in a comfortable chair placed in the center of the room and the others sat in a half circle facing him.

The lights were lowered and a moment of silence followed.

“Is it dark enough?” Ned asked. “It was my impression that mediums always worked in the dark, I can see all of you quite distinctly. In fact, now that my eyes are becoming accustomed to the light, I can see everything in the room.”

“It is not necessary for Mr. Elm to be in even this degree of darkness, for his work does not involve the production of ectoplasm. If you wish it, you may turn on the lights—but trance will come more quickly with subdued light and he will have no disagreeable feelings upon emerging.”

"I see. Then it is only in seances where ectoplasm is produced that darkness is really essential?"

"Ectoplasm is dissipated by white light. With strong mediums it can be produced and studied by red light. Mrs. Crandon has developed to the point where certain phenomena that involve the use of ectoplasm can be observed in short periods of white light. For instance, balances with one of the pans weighted have been made to balance in white light. The bell-box has been rung in white light. Pictures taken by flashlight of the hands, rods, and other structures built by 'Walter Stinson' from the ectoplasm of Mrs. Crandon also require a flash of tense, white light. As a rule, only one picture can be taken in an evening, due to the loss of ectoplasm following the flash."

While this discussion was in progress, Noel, who was watching the medium, observed that his eyes were closed, and that he appeared to be trembling slightly. Then with a deep sigh his head rested against the back of the chair for a moment. His body leaned forward slowly. Then sitting bolt upright in his chair he clasped his hands before him. The doctor was surprised to notice that the face of the medium seemed longer and the expression softer. At least, Noel felt certain afterwards that the appearance of the face he had been watching had undergone a marked change.

CHAPTER X

“GOOD evening, my friends.”



Noel started. The voice was a deep, strong bass of unusual timber. Could the vocal cords of this small man produce this quality of sound? It did not seem possible and yet it was, apparently, Elm who was speaking. His lips moved, and his throat worked—not loosely as though he were unconscious, but naturally with no attempt to conceal their movement.

Burton answered the voice.

“Good evening, Samuel.”

Dr. Noel seemed not to have heard. He spoke abruptly, voicing more of a challenge than a question.

“Is that man conscious?”

He half expected Burton to answer; but it was the same deep bass which replied. “No, he is as one asleep, and will recall nothing which transpires during the trance period.”

“If that is the case, how is it possible for two separate entities to occupy the same physical body at the same time?” The doctor’s voice was still professional and challenging.

“It is not possible,” replied the voice. “The astral body of the medium leaves his physical body slowly, in a way that permits my own to occupy it. At this moment my astral body completely fills his physical one. I take possession of his mind and control the voluntary nerves and muscles.”

“Is that all you control?” snapped Noel.

“Yes,” responded the voice softly.

Huntington found the voice most intriguing. It gave an impression of graciousness which suggested culture, and be-

spoke a controlling personality entirely separate from that of the medium.

"What keeps the man alive?" asked Noel suddenly, in the tone of one who has won a victory. "The involuntary nerves and muscles as well as the voluntary must be controlled, or heart and lungs cease functioning."

Burton stirred uneasily. His friend's abruptness was most disconcerting; but the voice was speaking again, apparently not the least disturbed by the doctor's attitude.

"On the contrary, Elm's superconscious—you call it the subconscious, while we over here know it to be the essence of consciousness—is at all times in direct control of his body's involuntary nerves and muscles. Only in the event of death would he cease to control them. Is that clear?"

"Not entirely," said the doctor quickly. "By what means does what you term the superconscious of the medium maintain control when separated from his body?"

"It is by an invisible cord or stream of energy, that the control is maintained," was the response.

Huntington had been listening intently to this conversation, and in the pause which followed Samuel's answer, he addressed the voice. "I wish you would explain just why you term the subconscious, superconscious."

"Your knowledge of the use and function of the not-yet-understood portions of your brain which has been gained through the use of its conscious portion, causes you to feel that you have discovered something below the level of consciousness. It is really above the present reach of your consciousness and constitutes your means of contact with the great forces of the universe."

Burton, feeling that the conversation was verging on rather deep water for his neophyte friends, changed the subject with the question:

"What is it that makes a table tip when a group sit with their hands placed on it?"

"In a great many cases it is the involuntary muscular movement of the group," replied the voice, "but not in all cases. Flowing from all mankind is a force. This force is energy which can be concentrated when a number of people contact, and center their attention upon, a single object. The energy is used by invisible operators, and table tipping like many other psychic manifestations is accomplished in this manner."

"Would the same method apply to automatic writing?" Burton continued.

"Yes, but there are several phases of automatic writing. In one, the invisible operator controls the hand of the person doing the writing without entrancing him. In another phase the hand and arm of the writer are entranced. In the latter type there is always coldness of the hand and arm. This sensation is subjective in some cases, objective in others. Then you have the type of writing executed by a medium in deep trance." The voice paused.

"How about slate writing?" pursued Ned.

"Slate writing is very easy to fake. The handwriting should be the basis on which to form judgment as to its genuineness."

This reply seemed to have a great effect upon the doctor for he burst forth the moment the voice ceased.

"What are you expecting us to believe?" he demanded. "These minds of ours can mislead us completely and the very things you are stating as facts are the so-called phenomena which tend to mislead many of us."

There was a silence following this outbreak on the doctor's part.

Then the voice responded.

"You men of science are positive regarding what you term knowledge. Is it not possible that there are two sides to every subject? Having very little understanding regarding the higher things of life, in many instances not believing

there are any such things, it is natural to feel that your conclusions are all that could be hoped for. As a matter of fact, most scientific inventions result from the application of fairly simple principles to a given set of phenomena. Take for example, the radio, the telephone or the telegraph; how few users really understand their operation and how simple it would be to deceive people about them."

The doctor interrupted quickly. "But that is different, these inventions are practical, therefor they are accepted and commonly used. In fact, each of them fills at least one of civilization's long felt needs. While your—"

"Quite right," interrupted the voice smoothly, "but your histories tell you that not one of those inventions were received wholeheartedly and without ridicule."

"Can communications of a psychic nature be constructive?" demanded the doctor.

"Man goes on after death, advancing according to his ability, which depends entirely upon what he has derived from earth's experiences. As morals are much a matter of geography, varying with different races, it will be through communicating with the planes beyond that man will learn how best to prepare for the life beyond."

"Does your plane of life govern ours?" inquired the doctor.

"In-so-far as the next plane of development must govern the preceding one in life's evolutionary scheme, but there is no interference or domination," answered 'Samuel.'

The doctor pondered this answer in silence.

In the meantime Ned asked: "How about age on your plane of expression?"

"We have no consciousness of lapse of time, so there is no aging. The very old, upon arriving here, are rejuvenated to, what you would term, their prime. The young advance to the same condition," responded the voice.

"One minute!" exclaimed Noel. "To imagine the developed person returning to the condition of greatest efficiency is not so difficult. On the other hand, small children, with practically no experience, forced to fight it out in a similar stage of development, seems unfair."

"Pardon me for giving the impression that the process is a rapid one, for it is not. The small children are placed under the guidance of a developed person, as a rule one who has been denied children while on earth. Thus, does the law of compensation work," returned the voice.

"How is your time taken up, when you are not talking through this man?" inquired Huntington.

"Much as yours is on earth. We have our regular periods for work and rest. They come in logical order as required." the voice responded. "My particular work is teaching."

Huntington seemed to wish to carry this discussion further.

"You say, 'Samuel,' that your work is teaching? As you can use this medium only a short time each day, it would seem that you must have a great deal of spare time on your hands. Is this the case?"

"When I am not teaching I spend a great deal of time at centers of learning on higher planes, for it is only by seeking constantly that one may hope to attain even a small amount of wisdom. It is impossible to explain the details of our fourth dimensional plane. Such attempts result as a rule in misunderstanding. Therefore, I would not attempt a description of our existence, but I will say that it is much like yours."

The doctor asked the next question.

"When you died what were your sensations?"

The voice began, "My passing was in part voluntary. Because of mental anguish I wished to die. It is cowardly and wrong to feel the way I did, for he who indulges in self

pity is running away from life. There is no escape. The situations which we have to face are necessary for our development, and must ultimately be faced and adjustments made before we can progress. I gave up and took to my bed. The wish to die prevailed slowly. A feeling of numbness beginning in the lower extremities spread over my entire body. A marked prickling sensation was present at the top of my head. The life force was leaving my body at that point. I recall having a detached feeling just prior to losing consciousness.

"I have no way of knowing how long afterward I awoke to find myself alive. Seeing many friends around me whom I knew had died, the realization came that I too had passed through the experience called death. The valley of the shadow was behind me. But understand this; I had even harder situations to face and work out here than those I had run away from.

"There is a law that none may remain idle for any length of time. A space was allowed in which necessary adjustments were made, then the urge within me which had been unable to find full expression during my earth life, expressed itself. Gravitation to that type of endeavor for which I was most fitted followed naturally. Does that answer your question?"

"Yes, in a way." It was plain that what the doctor had wished for was a more complete description of the physical sensations. He continued with a smile.

"How about judgment for your sins?"

"Having expected oblivion," continued the voice, "my first great shock was to find myself living. The next, was the fact that it was an acute consciousness of right and wrong within myself which was acting as my judge, and I reviewed my whole life in my new consciousness. It would be far easier to be purified by fire than to be forced to face the demands of this awakened consciousness. No one can escape its action. Regardless of a person's religious beliefs,

or the lack of them, he cannot escape facing and working out the basic truths."

"Then we are to take it that those who have not accepted the Christian religion are also saved?" pursued the doctor.

"The act of being born very largely settles the matter of one's religion. As the parent's, so the child's. Very little real thought is given the matter. The followers of Moses, Mahomet, Confucius, Buddha, Zoroaster, Christ and the countless prophets who preceded them in the evolution of the races, all have the same picture in a different setting. Trouble not yourself regarding them. Use the best light they offer toward living up to the highest that is in you." The voice answered.

The doctor seemed to be enjoying the turn the conversation had taken and persisted.

"The prayers of the Christian and the heathen are of like value then?"

"It is the desire prompting the prayer which brings help or makes it impossible for it to be given. The prayer of both Christian and heathen is to the highest they are capable of conceiving and equally subject to the law," replied the voice.

"What do you mean by the law?" inquired Ned.

"Your thoughts are things, actual, tangible. The selfish ones turn back upon the sender. The unselfish ones make contact with the great fount of everlasting love, bringing soul relief and help to the sender. That is the law." The voice ceased.

"What is your existence like?" asked Noel. "This is my first opportunity to ask a dead man what it seems like to be dead," he laughingly commented.

"I am always amused when people upon the earth plane refer to those who have gone on as dead. You are the dead ones, as some day you will realize.

"The life here parallels yours to such an extent that it is quite difficult to persuade some that the veil has been passed. It is hard for you to grasp the fact that we have houses, centers of learning, gardens and so forth. Our bodies are similar to yours, made up of tangible material differing in vibratory speed from those you inhabit. The impossibility of describing our existence to you is due to your inability to grasp our fourth dimensional existence. You are unable to translate a description of it into three dimensional understanding. This accounts for the confusion resulting from attempted discourse on the subject. The result is an entirely erroneous impression, as I have already told your friend." The voice paused.

Ned, who had been thoughtful during this speech, now sat up in his chair and addressed the unconscious medium.

"What, if anything, can we on earth do to help those of our loved ones who have gone on?" he inquired.

The voice was deeper when it gave answer to his question, the words came more slowly and distinctly, like the strokes of a deep toned bell.

"Stop grieving! Overcome your sorrow,—it is largely self-pity. Be thankful that those who have gone on are alive. They are released from all physical pain and suffering. Be patient—you will meet them again.

"Can our grief effect them?" continued Huntington.

"It causes them grief and tends to retard their progress. The strength given by constructive thoughts and prayers is helpful. When you allow grief to destroy your ability to help, you really impair their ability to advance," answered the voice.

"That is a new point of view and seems at variance with prevailing custom," Noel remarked.

"And," added the doctor, "prevailing custom is a dangerous wind mill to tilt against."

"Very," responded the voice. "But time changes everything. As the truth of survival is more generally accepted, and the conditions of the after life more fully understood, the present customs regarding the so-called dead will likewise change."

A period of silence followed this last statement. Each seemed occupied with his own thoughts.

"If there is nothing more I shall bid you good-night," stated the voice.

The medium stirred, sighed deeply, and in about two minutes his own, rather high pitched voice asked, "Well, here we are. How did it go?"

It was Burton who opened the discussion after Elm departed. "Now you are familiar with one distinct type of communication."

"What does he charge for his seances?" inquired Dr. Noel.

"Carfare from Buffalo," replied Burton, "and not even that if he feels that he can be of help to those who need it. However, I always pay him for the time and trouble involved, as it seems only fair."

Noel took out his pipe and filled it thoughtfully. "Christianity with its teachings that the oppressed shall be exalted and that the unhappy shall experience eternal bliss, seems to offer to the average man the kind of food his starved spirit needs. How would you say the teachings of Christianity fit in with the things we have heard tonight?" He paused for an instant before adding regretfully, "Wish I had asked him."

"I've thought of questions I would like to have answered, also," said Ned, who continued, "If the spirit of truth is the kernel of religion, then men of science are truly religious beings. They are convinced, as a rule, that immortality is material. Believing so, they work for the benefit of the world and humanity now and here. The one thing that men

of science insist upon is that their work must carry the stamp of verifiable truth. They will not accept the validity of creeds, which are the products of our human fancy, wandering about, more or less unhampered by fact. They seem inclined sometimes to be disagreeably smug in the self-appointed role of judge. I wonder—Science feels it knows so much . . . but does it?"

"In that connection, have you ever read any of the things given by a Mrs. Curran purporting to come from one 'Patience Worth'?"

"Who is she?" queried Ned.

"Mrs. Curran, now Mrs. H. Rogers, is a resident of St. Louis. Her control is 'Patience Worth.' The outstanding feature of their work together is an extraordinary ability to write poetry, medieval English, and Philosophy. Mrs. Curran started in this work when she was urged by a friend to use a ouija board. She acquired a marvelous power, and during the following twelve months she developed a control who called herself 'Patience Worth.' Since that time 'Patience' has written, through Mrs. Curran, 'The Sorry Tale,'* a story of Christ, which is considered by many students to be the most remarkable account of His life.

"It is said that a sitter, with a philosophical turn of mind, once said to 'Patience': 'Modern science holds that death destroys man, body and soul, and the psychologists claim that you are nothing but the action of Mrs. Curran's subconscious mind. What have you to say of man's destiny, and what about your connection with Mrs. Curran?' "

"To which 'Patience' is reported to have answered: 'Man's words may not destroy—they be but strutting little egots which disport themselves in obeisance before their lord and creator. Man, measuring His length and breadth. Man may tear into tatters even the commonest way rose, he may pluck it petal by petal, thorn by thorn, leaf by leaf,

*Published—1917.

and crush its stem. What then will he do with the perfume 'pon his finger tips? In its crushed atoms the way rose is still complete in its being. Man's argument, the cunning of his hand, hath done what? He is confronted with matters haunted with spirit, and hath found himself like unto an ass at the end of his tether. Who be these princelings that play no faith with the King? Who be these lordlings who would espouse wisdom and bring forth the brat o' doubt. Egad, no one may learn while his doubt brat wailles'?"

"As to her relation to Mrs. Curran, her medium, she is said to have written: 'Who be he who said that I be a distorted whit o' the folly's imagination? Who be he that can present a greater man, as a child of his imagination, than he himself be? His be a sma', sma' voice who sayeth 'No' nimbly. Let him lay hands on me and her, and days to come shall write his name FOOL, for he is not for the ages. His quill will be short, and I, sirrah, will be a long quill dipped in old wisdom. I sing not but that the songs be. As well give babes tomes, skulls, wines, swords, sacraments with which to play, as present me as a part of mine harp,* for behold I am separate—strumming—and she, the babe, and wonder-eyed, playing with old wisdom.'

"One of the remarkable verses given by 'Patience Worth' called 'The Potter and The Wheel' was published in 1927. The general consensus of opinion seems to be that such works would be hard to imitate and would be difficult to charge to the subconscious mind of the medium.

"Let me read you 'Patience Worth's creed.'" Burton reached for his scrap book. "It has always appealed to me:"

What in this great and gaudy day
Is left undone,
What ministration,
What understanding, what lending.

*'Patience' refers to Mrs. Curran as her harp and says, 'I will use my harp 'til she be broken and mute.'

What in this great and gaudy day
Is left undone—this would I do
This ministration
Oh, I would take unto my heart
Such who suffer
Such who yearn
Such who need.
I would not minister unto them
With heavy hand.
I would with a laugh fling me
As a joyous spray
'Gainst the leaden sky of day,
Lend myself in joy
To the task in hand,
For this is my creed.

“Mrs Curran is one of that group of psychics whose genuineness can only be judged from the nature and quality of her work. She certainly is a normal individual with a well rounded life, showing normal reactions to her environment,” stated Burton.

“Interesting, but it’s growing late,” said Ned rising. “Bob, old man, I should like to listen to an independent voice medium. Can you get hold of one?”

“I shall try,” answered Burton. “Some friends of mine have a New York man stop here once or twice a year on his way through from his western trips. I’ll get in touch with them.”

CHAPTER XI

NED HUNTINGTON was the first to arrive in response to Burton's telephone call.

"Talk about luck!" he exclaimed as he entered the living room. "I express a wish to see a direct voice medium in action, and within two days you call and say that it is definitely arranged. Do you keep these people on tap?"

"Hardly," Burton laughingly responded. "You and Noel have, so far, impressed me with the fair, open-minded way you have gone after information. It is natural that I should make every effort to give you that which you seek. I happened to know that a New York medium has been stopping over here, on his return from the west every fall and being acquainted with the members of the group with whom he sits, the rest was easy."

They were interrupted by the arrival of Noel.

"Well, well, am I late?" he demanded. "Thought my office hours would never end. Where is this event to take place, and what about it?"

"Both of you are invited to join a local group as my guests. Hold any questions or criticisms you may have until we return," requested Burton. "I will drive you both to Mrs. Walker's, where the seance is to be held."

Upon arrival they were greeted by a smiling, middle-aged lady and introduced to the visiting medium who was a rather small man with clear blue eyes and a very pleasing manner.

A room on the ground floor had been set aside for the seance. All furniture had been removed and chairs placed along the walls. Placed on the floor, in a cleared space in

the middle of the room, were three tin trumpets, a bowl of water, a banjo and a vase of cut flowers.

Burton noted that Noel and Ned exchanged significant glances at the sight of this paraphernalia.

The three guests sat next to each other, Bob between Ned and the doctor. Lights were extinguished and, with no attempt at control of either the medium or the sitters, the seance began. The entire group joined in singing and general conversation. This lasted about ten minutes when the doctor leaned toward Burton and in a low whisper, remarked, "One of those tin things seems to be sailing about in the air. It just touched my head."

The response to this statement was a low chuckle, which caused them both to start.

"This is more in the line of action than our last experience," breathed the doctor.

Just then, all three trumpets rose and seemed to be travelling about the room. The banjo, after being twanged several times, apparently, joined the general flight. First it was strummed at one point in the circle and then at another. Voices issued from the trumpets bringing messages to various members of the group. All of these seemed to be accepted without question or comment. Both the doctor and Huntington were touched upon the head, shoulders and hands, at their own request. They were accused of being doubters by distinct whispers. As a sort of grand finale, the bouquet of flowers was passed among those present by unseen hands. At Burton's request one of the flowers was placed behind Noel's right ear. The meeting closed with an announcement by the invisible master of ceremonies that it was seven minutes past eleven and time to bring things to a close. The lights were turned on and the statement regarding the hour was found to be correct.

No sooner were the good-nights over, and the three friends back in their car, than conversation literally broke loose.

"What did you make of the performance?" demanded Noel.

"At first I thought the phenomena easily explained; but after the first fifteen minutes or so, my explanations seemed more difficult to accept than the amazing things that were happening," responded Ned. "What do you make of it, Bob?"

"I should be willing to accept the majority of the phenomena as genuine; but owing to the entire lack of control one is forced to look upon the entire evening as merely entertaining," Burton answered.

"Alright; but how were they accomplished?" persisted the doctor.

"If you are directing your question at me," stated Huntington, "I am unable to answer. The entire show was beyond me. I'm completely bewildered."

Burton stopped before the house. Noel turned as he was part way through the door of the sedan.

"The easiest thing to do, when confronted with a series of happenings such as we have just witnessed, is to throw aside all reasonable explanations and say the one word 'spirit.' That does not suit my type of mentality. Let us review our impressions, while they are still fresh in our minds, and attempt to find a normal method by which most, if not all, of the things we saw could be accomplished."

"What were the things that impressed you most?" the doctor directed his question at Huntington as they entered the house.

"The trumpets. When the first one rose in the air I felt certain that the medium or one of the sitters had taken hold of it and was swinging it in the air above our heads. Then I became conscious of the fact that two or possibly all three were sailing around. While trying to convince myself that two or more of the group were helping to produce the show, one of the trumpets slid half way down my

back. Then it tapped me on the ear, and a whisper said, 'You are doubting. Stop it.' While this was occurring one of the other trumpets touched first one and then the other eyeglass. The possibility of the medium controlling the trumpets by means of collapsible rods had suggested itself. But the trumpet down my back would have been impossible to control by the method I had in mind."

Dr. Noel, who had been listening closely while Huntington was talking, began walking up and down the room. Suddenly turned to Burton, "Get that medium on the 'phone. See if he can be persuaded to stay over a day and give us a private sitting. I will foot the bill. This thing bothers me."

Without any delay Burton departed in the direction of the 'phone.

"Your idea, as to the method used, was in my mind also. There is a simple check. If Bob is able to get our man we shall try it," Noel continued.

"What have you in mind?" Ned inquired.

"You noticed that the trumpets stayed inside, or just over, the heads of the group? Now, a long steel rod would enable the medium to control a trumpet with ease, unless someone came between him and the trumpet." Dr. Noel stated emphatically.

"How do you explain his handling three of them at one time, not to mention the banjo and flowers?" asked Ned.

"Damn it, I can't," Noel burst out. "That's what bothers me so about the whole thing." He stopped suddenly and burst out laughing. "I begin to see how some of the committee members who have been chosen to report on mediums must feel. I would seem like a fool, were I to state now that there is apparently no explanation for the things I have seen with my own eyes."

Huntington watched him as he continued to pace back and forth. He stopped and stood gazing into a corner of the

room, then walked quickly toward it. Turning he faced Huntington.

"Should we be able to get 'Mr. Medium,' let's place his chair here. Now we three will sit thus." He swept his hands from wall to wall. "That will close him in on all sides" Noel beamed at Ned.

"All you have done is shut him in so that to escape he must jump over one of us. What have you gained?" Huntington had a whimsical look.

"I have not finished. Now for the test." The doctor placed himself in the corner. He took three steps toward the center of the room and stopped. "Right across here I shall stretch silk threads from wall to wall, leaving a six inch space between the threads. Now if a single trumpet passes between those strands and then up toward the ceiling, either the medium does not control them by rods, or we find a broken thread."

Ned, who had risen, placed three chairs across the corner.

"You would certainly seem to have him cornered by an arrangement like that. By Jove! It will be interesting to see what happens. But the mere fact that we are unable to detect fraud will not remove the possibility of fraud being present." Ned was interested.

Burton returned to the room.

"Our luck still holds. He will be able to stop over one evening. Be prepared for a shock, doctor. You said this party was on you, and he asks fifty dollars a sitting. You may have as many as you wish present, however," he smiled at Noel.

"It will be well worth it to me. What time will he be here?" asked Noel.

"I told him nine sharp."

They described their plan to Burton who gave his approval by a series of nods. He was enjoying the intense

way both his friends were taking what to him was an old situation.

After their departure he stood gazing at the corner where the chairs were arranged according to his friends' plan. A slow smile lifted the corners of his mouth. He thought, "They are people who should be giving some worthwhile effort to this line of research."

The following evening Bob arranged an extension cord in such a way that the corner of the room could be illuminated by means of a red light. He then suspended a curtain behind the three chairs, thus cutting the entire corner off from the balance of the room.

The doctor and Ned arrived early in order to assist with the arrangements. At the time set the medium put in his appearance. Burton explained the arrangements and asked him if he desired to make any changes.

"I never object to reasonable requests regarding one of my sittings, save when the suggestions show clearly a complete lack of knowledge of the essentials which must be present in order that manifestations may take place. In which case there is no possible point in allowing them to be carried through," stated the medium. "The red light must not be too bright or the guides will have great difficulty in working. We can make it subdued enough after the other lights are out."

Dr. Noel arranged the strands of silk from one wall to the other, in front of the medium, after he was seated, by fastening the ends to each of the side walls by means of adhesive tape. In the center of each strand a small piece of white cloth was fixed so that it would be visible in subdued light.

"If you wish, you may use your tape to fasten my hands and feet to the chair," stated the medium.

Noel accepted the offer with alacrity. After giving the arrangement a final scrutiny, the doctor turned out the

bright light in the room and took his seat. A general discussion of the preceding evening's happenings followed. Both Ned and Noel had many questions. The medium stated that the red light was much too bright. This was corrected by covering the shade with several thicknesses of red paper.

The first indication of action was a whispered voice coming from near the medium. "We may show you something, but it is hard to get started with so few present."

Fully twenty minutes passed. The medium seemed restless and shifted his position many times. Every once in a while a deep sigh escaped him.

A slight rocking motion of one of the trumpets which had been placed on the floor between the medium and the rest of the group became noticeable. As they watched, this motion became more marked and it lifted clear of the floor to disappear above the area of light. Noel was leaning as far forward as possible. In a moment the remaining trumpet joined its companion. Soon they were able to distinguish both trumpets, apparently stationary above the highest silk strand marker. Slowly the trumpets dipped, passing below the marker, moved toward the observers, dipped and passed toward the medium above the next marker. Thus, they passed back and forth through the silk strands, over one and under the other, coming to rest at last above the heads of the group.

"Now watch," said a voice from the nearest trumpet. With remarkable speed the performance was repeated. The trumpets went in opposite directions and again came to rest above the level of their heads.

Lined up side by side, they now approached the doctor.

"Does that answer the questions in your mind?" inquired a voice.

"Well I should say so," sighed Noel.

"Now turn out the red light for we have those here who wish to speak with you and it is hard in so much light," continued the whisper.

Huntington who was directly opposite the suspended light complied with the request. A few moments of silence followed. Then a voice claiming to be that of Ned's father spoke to him. A rather lengthy conversation followed.

"Father, can you give me some proof of your identity? Some mark with which we were both familiar?" Ned had in mind a tatoo mark on his father's forearm.

"Did you ever know anyone who had lost the sight of one eye?" queried the voice.

"No-o. No one that I can recall," responded Huntington slowly.

"Well, I am standing right before you, my boy," came the response. Both noticed a start on the part of Ned. He afterwards told them that his entire thought had been on the tatoo mark, and he had quite forgotten the fact that his father had lost the sight of one eye a short time prior to his death.

A voice claiming to be that of Noel's grandmother addressed him in Norwegian. Although he made very little reference to the text of the conversation afterwards, it was apparent to both Ned and Bob that he was deeply impressed by the occurrence.

The voice that had taken charge of the sitting from the start now requested that the red light be turned on.

"Watch for the rod from the medium," the same voice continued.

A trumpet then sailed under the red light, back and forth slowly, completely visible to the sitters.

"Goodnight, hope you liked that," said the same voice.

The trumpets fell to the floor. In a few moments the medium moved, sighed, and then sat forward in his chair.

"How was it?" he inquired.

General conversation followed, while the room was being restored to its normal state. Inviting them to visit him in New York, at any time, the medium took his leave.

Noel, Huntington and Bob were left standing in the hall. Observing his friends' expressions a slow smile spread over Burton's face, causing his eyes to dance.

CHAPTER XII

THE evening had been given over to a discussion of the possible meaning back of the phenomena occurring in seance rooms the world over.

"I have a growing conviction" said Noel, "that the findings in this field are far too important to be ignored by any intelligent person."

"From the statements made by the departed regarding life," Bob remarked, "one gathers that we are put here on this small fragment of the universe to learn from experience one phase of existence. We must keep an eye upon our personal development at all times, striving to comprehend, in-so-far as we are able, the purpose of the whole scheme of life, and attempting always to enlarge our ability to comprehend."

"Your thought there is well expressed in one of Sara Teasdale's poems called 'Lessons'," Ned remarked. "Have you a copy of her work?"

The book was produced and he quickly found the poem in question. "Here," he said, and read:

'Unless I learn to ask no help
From any soul but mine,
To seek no strength in waving reeds
Nor shade beneath a straggling vine;
Unless I learn to look at grief
Unshrinking from her tear-blind eyes
And take from pleasure fearlessly
Whatever gifts will make me wise—
Unless I learn these things on earth,
Why was I ever given birth?'

"Assuming the earth life to be a preparation for a continued existence, one might conceive the soul to be an individual's wireless tower, by means of which, when proper-

ly attuned, he is enabled to receive impressions from the forces in the surrounding universe," commented Noel.

"The remarkable experience recorded by Bligh Bond, in his 'Gates to Remembrance' tends to bear out the contention that those in the Beyond carry with them remembered experiences.

"Mr. Bond had charge of the excavation work conducted in the hope of locating the long buried foundations of Glastonbury Abby. There were no records by which to be guided. Monks of the distant past, through automatic writing, described the location of the long buried walls and other structures. The script was in ancient Latin and quaint old English. Excavations made on the strength of these revealed the fact that these spirits could recall, or knew the location of the hidden structures. Rough drawings were also given, to aid the work. This has been an outstanding incident in the annals of spirit communication.

"My feeling is," stated Burton, "that science will some day prove to the world that there is vastly more behind this line of research than any of us even imagine."

"Do you recall the remark of the medium we had here regarding the effect of our grief upon those who had passed on?" queried Ned abruptly, "I have been thinking that over. Heaven is held forth as the promised paradise for those who live the proper sort of life on this earth, and yet when those we love are called to their promised reward we seem unable to get beyond our own self pity."

"Let me read you a poem on the subject of bidding farewell to those who leave us for their trip upon the great unchartered sea." Bob rose and while procuring the poem in question, continued:

"Dr. Crandon and his medical friends were not believers in survival before they became interested in psychical research. One of them had left a written request that, in the event of his death, Dr. Crandon should conduct such funeral

services as he saw fit. This particular friend died and Dr. Crandon, who's ideas upon the subject of death and survival had undergone a complete reversal, appealed to 'Walter' for help. 'What shall I say at the funeral service?' he asked. In a few moments the reply came in 'Walter's' voice: 'Write this down as I give it.' He then dictated the following:

The Voyageur

**'There is a plan far greater than the one you know,
There is a landscape broader than the one you see,
There is a haven where storm-tossed souls may go,
You call it death—we—Immortality.**

**You call it death, this seeming endless sleep,
We call it birth, the soul at last is free,
'Tis hampered not by time or space; You weep,
Why weep at death—'tis Immortality.**

**Farewell, dear Voyageur—'twill not be long,
Your work is done—now may peace rest with thee.
Your kindly thoughts and deeds—they will live on.
This is not death—'tis Immortality.**

**Farewell, dear Voyageur—the river winds and turns,
The cadence of your song wafts near to me,
And now you know the thing that all men learn:
There is no death: there's Immortality.'**

There was a period of silence following the reading. Then Noel said thoughtfully, "It would be most comforting if one could only be sure. Feeling certain seems, still, only a matter of faith."

"Fields scarred for certain grain," quoted Bob. "It would seem that the matter of faith in many things is more or less substantiated fact. The farmer prepares his fields each spring with the full knowledge that hail, flood, drought and all manner of pestilence stand between him and a crop. Nevertheless the race has planted so long that its faith has become an accepted fact."

Ned who had been sitting with his head between his hands, suddenly straightened up. "Let's see what we can establish definitely in the way of proof."

"There is no such thing as proof," stated Noel. "The legal profession bases its conclusions on a mass of accumulated evidence—but there is no proof. When sufficient evidence is produced a man, or group of men as the case may be, say in effect, 'I am satisfied.' Science is based upon postulates, hypothetical assumptions. Organized religion lays down a set of doctrines and attempts to explain them in a reasonable manner. Nowhere do we find absolute proof. We can list our evidence in order to arrive at some conclusion. It will differ with individuals; but it will at least be a conclusion."

"Why not review such evidence as we have been able to collect?" suggested Huntington.

"Here is a mass of it," stated Burton, opening his scrapbook. "This record starts with the findings of the pioneers. The report of the London Dialectical Society in 1870, followed by the work of Sir. William Crooks, F. R. S., some years later. It also covers Dr. A. R. Wallace's thorough and painstaking studies of forty years, from 1873 to 1913, and work done by Zoller and Aksakoff, who spent a great deal of time studying seance room phenomena about 1890. Then we find W. H. Myers who devoted approximately eleven years to the same line of research. Coming up to the year 1905 we have the work of Hyslop, of Professor Boerac, of Sir William Barrett, Sir Oliver Lodge, Dr. Geley, Dr. Baron von Schrenck-Notzing, and a host of others. This brings us up to the present period of study with such names as Richet, Dr. E. Osty, Richardson, Crandon, Dudley, Hamilton—" Burton paused to turn some pages.

"That certainly is an imposing group of scientific men. It would not seem possible to sustain the contention that the study of this subject had been carried on by the unintelligent and unscientific," remarked Huntington.

"The similarity of results obtained by these researchers, with outstanding mediums, would lead one to the conclusion that they could not all be conniving merely for the purpose of deceiving themselves," supplemented Noel.

"Another interesting fact is that in reports and descriptions of conditions in the life after death tally. It would not seem probable that all mediums speak a prearranged monologue, would it?" queried Bob.

"The most outstanding mediumship from the point of purely scientific investigation, devoid of religious or emotional bias, is that of Mrs. L. R. G. Crandon, 'Margery,' stated Burton.

"The evidence presented by the Crandon group is well summarized in this little sheet of printed matter sent me by Dr. Crandon. With your consent, I shall present it as exhibit 'A.' It is headed 'The Margery Mediumship, Its Relationship to the Problem of Survival and Communication'." Bob went on:

"Individual survival has apparently been demonstrated through this mediumship, without any admixture of faith or revelation. Five years of experimentation, conducted without emotion or bias by a group of wholly scientific observers has established the following facts:

Walter Stinson can produce under strict mechanical control of the medium, on a marked piece of wax, in the presence of one or many expert observers, a constant thumb print not that of any sitter. One-third of a thumb print on Walter's razor handle is identical, line for line, with the seance print. This print also resembles Mrs. Crandon's thumb print 45%, and that of the mother of Walter Stinson and his sister, Mrs. Crandon, 70%, which is a proper relationship of prints between brother and sister and son and mother. A thumb print means an individual.

Walter Stinson in the dark, in the absence of his sister Mrs. Crandon, can perceive a word or figure on a card selected haphazard, and later the same night can cause Mrs. Crandon, eight miles away, another medium two-hundred and fifty miles away and another medium five hundred and fifty miles away, each to produce a partial description of the selected

card so that the combined descriptions make an accurate whole—a perfect cross-correspondence.

Thus, Walter Stinson, identified by a thumb print which has been subjected to world wide police expert criticism, can make intelligent cognitions in the absence of a medium, and can convey them to three distant mediums. Therefor, it would seem certain Walter Stinson is not a subconscious impersonation.

Certain telekinetic phenomena have occurred repeatedly in the house, in the absence of Mrs. Crandon. This is a true haunt. The other phenomena of this mediumship, first and last, include every kind recorded in metapsychical history. This variety and significance are overwhelming.

‘It is believed with confidence, that the observations made, and technique employed are truly scientific and will endure. The attitude of modern experimental science is the most open-minded in the world; but that of orthodox science toward the spiritual problems of man bears little resemblance to it. We can no longer afford to take a serious attitude toward the latter. It serves only to retard the progress of our work.

From the identified Walter Stinson one gets a vista of his present life which suggests the desirable survival. This is one in which a continuity of experience analogous to that which we are aware of here is carried on into life after death. The essence of that life being the continuous unfolding, no doubt, through stress and conflict, of these potentialities of good, of which we are aware here as the most significant part of ourselves’.

Ned and the doctor were silent for some space. Then Ned announced simply—“I for one believe the study worth while.”

“At any rate one has his choice,” Noel added, “he can withdraw to the shelter of the ‘house by the side of the road’ content to question none of the accepted traditions, or plunge into the moving stream of humanity—there to live, learn, help and be helped, with a certain confidence that he is blessed by experiences and that his future is sure, safe and continuous.”

"To me it is more than security," Burton stated, "it is an approach at least, toward peace. Souls might be likened to people who sit before the fire together watching what happens in the grate, talking little, satisfied with a sense of nearness and intimacy. Words, after all, are but vehicles for ideas, and when once understanding is reached conversation may merge into communion. This is the soul's gift and the result of clear vision, an ardor for life, and an appreciation of the little tasks which are made significant through understanding, giving the heart, hand and brain their legitimate employment, and bringing one the conscious feeling of Eternal Life.

"There is apparently an end to all things—but is it the real end? See the logs break there," he indicated the grate fire, "for lack of something to feed upon the embers pale, and the gray ash increases."

"When the fire and energy of this body of mine are consumed and the ash of age is gathering, then may I still hold the thought of those who love me, whom I have loved, gone but a short space ahead. Entering upon even new adventures the chill will be kept from my heart. The hour will come as it does to all,—yet, armored for the glorious tomorrow, what a vast difference it will make!" Burton concluded.

"Yes," Ned added, "it revives an old-fashioned impression of mine that still stays from Sunday-school days, 'Know ye the Lord.' But how differently I interpret it now. To know the Universal Power one must have some definite starting point from which to carry on his investigation. I feel it has been shown to me for the first time in a clear and understandable way,—a way which each can follow and be, as it were, his own discoverer, gaining, at least, a part of the Infinite Understanding that 'all things work together for good'."

"Just review the story of man's progress for your answer," said Bob. "From the time when man first raised his blinking eyes to the sun until the last of his kind van-

ishes from the earth, the riddle of life has been and shall be the paramount issue of his existence. Ever has he questioned, ever has he continued to search out the answers to his questioning, and he seems destined to continue thus.

“One can follow the course of man’s dramatic struggle for knowledge through the pages of his record as set down by historians. Up through the maze of surmise and superstition the race has struggled. Heavy has been the price demanded for each forward step, and slow indeed the acceptance of new facts,—but always man has moved toward an ever broadening understanding of himself in relation to his environment, in his relation to the universe. It is indeed a sorry tale of stupidity and cruelty that is spread upon the pages of history. Yet as the bright stars lend beauty to the black night, so do the records of those men and women, rising from the blackness of history’s pages to lead the struggling masses toward light and understanding, lend beauty to the record.

“Rotting in dungeons they have given their bodies to feed the roots of progress, that it might grow. Tortured by the rack and inquisition, their groans have been the rallying cry for those who faltered in the advance. Burned at the stake, they have fed the flames that were a beacon through the darkness to guide those who followed.

“Always the resistance of the masses—spurred by the fear of any innovation in the existing scheme of things—has endeavored to destroy these daring disciples of the truth. Each advance gained in knowledge and science has had its price and has left an entry in the great ledger of all time as to whom and by whom paid.

“Man’s greed for possession and power and his fear of the unknown, his ability to fall into comfortable positions without reason or question, have helped to deter his progress and to make him resentful of those who might disturb the order of things as it pleases him to have them.

“Still the daring searchers have struggled against the entrenched ideas, and slowly—very slowly—man accepts

the new, when it has had time to age, to become familiar, and free from the possible criticism of the herd.

“A lifetime is short indeed, and the average man naturally feels that the satisfaction to be gained by achievement and possession makes the effort put forth to acquire them well worth while. He becomes absorbed in his particular line of endeavor, and fear of failure or loss drives him like a dumb beast along the one line—until he is leveled by death.

“In the twilight of his earthly days he pauses sometimes to wonder, to ponder upon a possible tomorrow and what it may mean. What can it mean? What information is there upon which to base judgment?

“I recall standing at the water’s edge near old Fort Niagara one beautiful summer evening. A strong wind was blowing from the east. The clear notes of a bugle sounding ‘taps’ floated over the tumbling, beating waves of the lake. In the west the first glowing radiance of the evening star was visible. My thoughts caught at its symbolism. Nightly had it traversed the heavens since time was—coming into our limited range of vision on the western edge of the world. This star, moving in its prescribed orbit across the vast void displaying the glory of God, becomes the star of the morning and disappears amid the rose and gold hues, which, rolling back the curtain of darkness, herald the dawn of a new day. I can still see the scene in memory, the wind subsiding with the sunset, the troubled waters becoming a tranquil mirror for the reflected stars to dance upon, and to me ‘taps’ and ‘sunrise’ suddenly took on new meaning and blended into one another. I found myself asking the question: Why does not science, to which the way is now open,—science, that traces the life of the smallest insects through their various stages of existence, show man the answer to his most persistent question?

“After the grave—what?”