OUR AMERICAN ADVENTURE

ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

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By SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

On the Life Hereafter

THE NEW REVELATION
THE VITAL MESSAGE
THE COMING OF THE FAIRIES
THE CASE FOR SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHY
THE WANDERINGS OF A SPIRITUALIST
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NEW YORK
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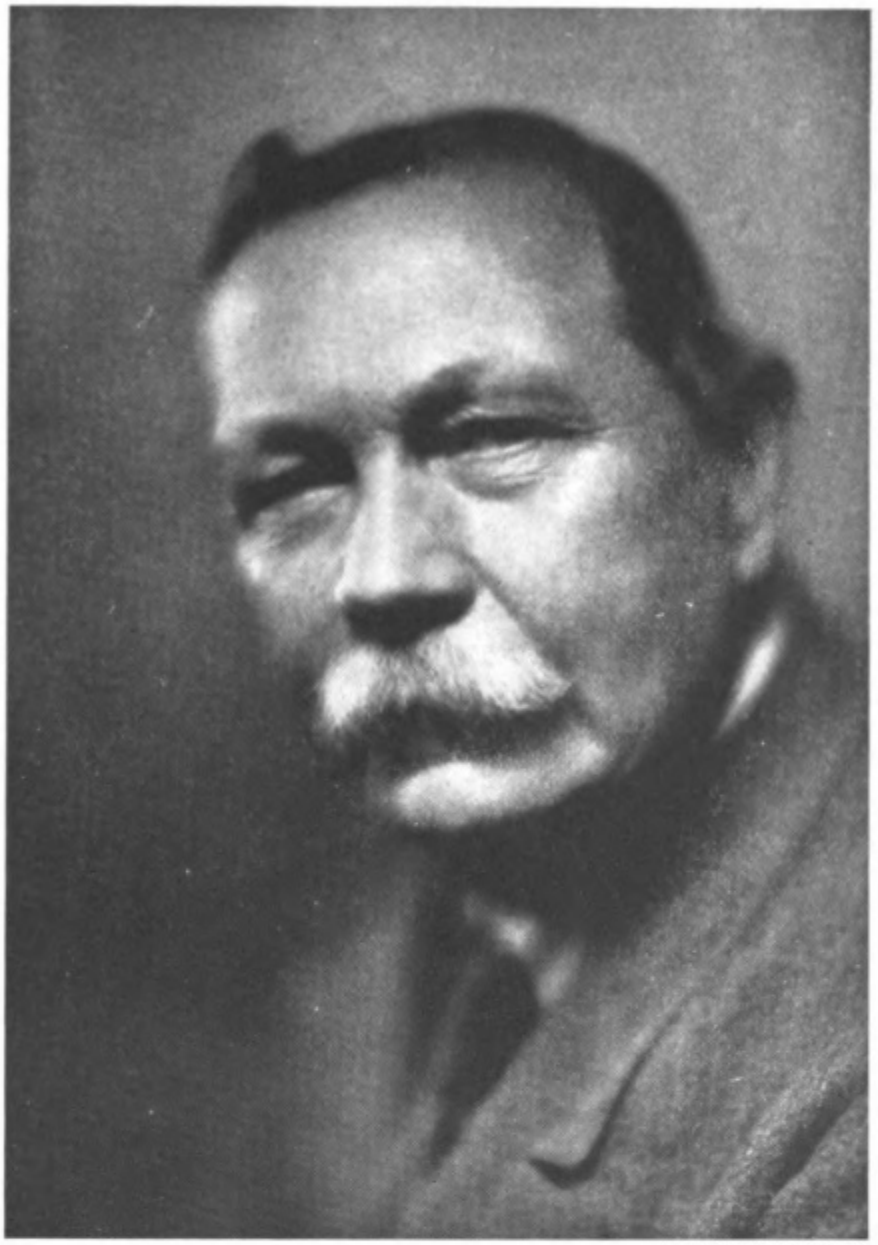

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OUR AMERICAN ADVENTURE

CHAPTER I

A New Venture—A Prophecy—Speculations—The Sentinels at the Gate—A Manifesto—The Cinema Ordeal—William J. Burns—First Impressions.

It is April the 9th, 1922. The low shores of New Jersey rise slowly on the port bow. We have passed the Fire Island signal-boat, the outlying picket of America, and now the good old *Baltic* turns her broad prow towards the Sandy Hook Point where the great salt highway leads to what will perhaps some day be the metropolis of the world. I sit alone on the hurricane-deck—and I think.

It is hardly a year since we returned from Australia, and yet here we are, my wife, my two boys, my little girl, and myself, embarked upon this new more formidable venture. We are seven in all, for Mr. Preston, a young Cambridge graduate, hardly recovered yet from a wound in the war, and Miss Stable, the daughter of an old friend, have come to help with the children. What with the complex cares of so large a party and all the difficulties ahead of us, our hearts might well have failed us and we might have wished

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ourselves back in the deep peace and comfort of our pleasant Sussex home, if it were not that there is something in this errand which ensures that when once you have set your feet upon the path it smooths out before you and you never doubt that you will attain your end. We had high assurances from that other world which is so close to ours, if we will but heed it, as to the need and the outcome of such a mission. "You have no idea what great and glorious work you are going to do. You will leave your mark for ever upon America. We will all be with you, giving you inspiration and power and health." Such was the cheering and wonderful message which I had received on March 17th in that home circle which had never yet said the thing which did not come to pass.

Some one had to do it. That was very clear to me. The work was there, and the work was to be done. If not me, then some one with greater powers. My own personal powers were little enough, but when immortal forces are behind you, your real personality counts for nothing. Therefore I was bound to try. And one could only try, for if one failed, what then? It was but time and energy misspent, with a little ridicule thrown in. But no failure could be permanent. The churches had to be spiritualised. Mankind had to face its problems. The new facts, as clear as daylight, had to come into their own. Materialism and comfort and legend had to yield to truth and duty and the beauty of the new revelation. All this had to be done, and it mattered nothing who did it. I must try, since I was guided that way, and if they would not take my message seriously, then another would surely come who

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would compel belief. The eternal forces would find their right agent somehow and somewhere. The great generals use the small privates, and whether we stand inside the fort or lie in front of it matters little so long as the fight is won.

At my age I am in a position where I have nothing either to fear or to hope for from any worldly source. I desire nothing further that the world can give me, and I dread nothing which it can either do to me or say of me. Therefore my one desire is to say exactly what I believe to be true, and there I have indeed a fear, for it would shock me greatly if ever I thought that others had been misled by me. But I examine carefully and I weigh my words, and if ever I have erred, that erring, for which I mourn, must surely count as a small thing compared to the amount of truth which I can vouch for from my own experience, confirmed by the testimony of many who are wiser and more learned than I. Therefore it is that I spend the span of life which is left to me in helping a cause which cannot fail—since truth can never ultimately fail—to influence deeply the future of mankind.

And yet as I saw those white houses on shore growing larger and the bay opening out before us, I saw also the dangers that lay there, and how formidable they were. They have a keen sense of humour, these Americans, and no subject can be more easily made humorous than this. They are intensely practical, and this would appear to them visionary. They are immersed in worldly pursuits, and this cuts right across the path of their lives. Above all, they are swayed by the Press, and if the Press takes a flippant attitude

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I have no means of getting behind it. These were the obvious difficulties. Well, one could only meet them with such fortitude as one might.

And then next moment they were at close grips with me. A dozen rather unkempt, keen-faced, alert young or middle-aged men, slouch-hatted, overcoated, rough and ready, had boarded our ship at the Narrows, as soon as quarantine was granted. They pinned me in a corner and were showering questions upon me. These eager men are not intruders. A private individual may resent their presence, but a man on public business has no right to do so. They are not there for their own pleasure. They are there for their duty—often an unpleasant one, and they do it with remarkable intelligence and discretion. Of course they are human and they are out for copy. If they see a chink in your armour, they will thrust for it. Thus poor Mrs. Asquith was bombarded with questions as to her private opinion of Mr. Lloyd George. If you are perfectly frank, you are safe; but they are not men whom I would care to bamboozle. They have seen too much of men and of life, these sentries at the gut of the strait who challenge all who pass. Well, they were very good to me. Their questions were so clear-cut and intelligent that I saw signs of organised preparation. They got to the heart of things at once. I asked nothing better, and so we had a lively hour together, while the *Baltic* slowly made for her moorings. They were America, those men. The first word of your mission is sent from end to end of that great Continent, as it is impressed upon their minds. It is worth all the courtesy and clarity that you can command. I am

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told that it was all very favourable and that their reports were both good and accurate.

I had prepared one or two vital headings for their reference, and I may as well hand them to the reader as to the pressman, that he may have a more intelligent idea of what was my line of thought. "Making every allowance," said this *aide-memoire,* "for fraud, which has been greatly exaggerated, and for self-deception, which is far more common, there remains a great residuum of proved fact which makes this psychic movement the most serious attempt ever made to place religion upon a basis of definite proof. It is the one great final antidote to materialism, which is the cause of most of our recent world-troubles. If we can only make this good—and the case has only to be clearly stated to carry conviction, then surely America has good cause to be proud that this great restatement of the fundamentals of religion should have had its origin upon her soil. It has been degraded by some who believed in it, and derided by all who did not, but the time has come to recognise the vital good that is in it, and to free it from sordid influences. High spirits did not descend upon earth to tell fortunes or to advise on business matters. Such uses bring a curse with them. The true aim of communication with spirits is consolation, knowledge of spiritual matters, including conditions of life after death, and above all self-improvement.

"Far from being antagonistic to religion, this psychic movement is destined to revivify religion, which has long been decaying and becoming a mere formality. This new knowledge makes it real and sure and en-

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ables one for the first time to understand the actions and views of the early Christians and of their great Leader. Without this psychic knowledge much of the New Testament is incomprehensible. With it one has renewed assurance of its essential truth.

"It unites real science and real religion, each supporting the other."

Such was my key-note, and it was of great importance that I should get it across in these my opening interviews.

The interviewer and later the photographer are familiar incidents, but the cinema man adds something new to the final difficulties of the traveller. It is a very real test of patience and temper when one is weary and unkempt. With the interviewer one can help oneself by the reflection that one is advocating and advancing one's cause, but one does not hope to gain much on one's personal appearance. The cinema ordeal was once the occasion of a comic episode when my wife, seeing a machine erected before me, and thinking that I was showing more curved waistcoat than was good, darted forward and readjusted me, unaware that the cinema handle was hard at work. Then when I shouted a word of warning she made matters worse by throwing up her hands and gasping. It was a delicious piece of natural comedy as it came out upon the screen, but I insisted upon a private performance and carried off that part of the roll for my own use in the future.

So we passed the dragons at the gate, and those other dragons of the Customs House, being greatly helped in all things by the presence of an old friend,

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William J. Burns, the great Secret Service agent. It may sound sinister to admit that a famous detective was the first to accost you as you arrived, but William J. is a mighty useful friend in any tight corner. I found him the same as ever, quiet, gentle, efficient, with impassive face and eyes which miss nothing. He is now, I understand, in very special command of the Secret Service at Washington, and in the immediate entourage of the President. Late that night, a weary and bedraggled party drove through the deep-cliffed cañons with the thousands of twinkling lights, which cut their way through the great city. Tired as they were, the children watched with wondering eyes, for it is a scene which can never be forgotten by a European. There is a rush and roar with a brilliancy and sense of motion and power such as can nowhere else be found. At last our two cabs pulled up at the famous Ambassador Hotel, where I found Mr. Kroel, the manager, to be an old acquaintance from the Berkeley Hotel in London. We had reached the domestic stage where a man's troubles end and a woman's begin. But we were all happy, for we were safe in our headquarters and the Second Act of our Adventure was about to begin.

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CHAPTER II

American Types—The Ordeal of the Press—Their Questions—The New City—American Unselfishness in Wartime—The Crime-Wave—My Hold-up—The First Lecture—An Impressive Audience—The General Argument.

After breakfast on the next morning, Monday, April 10th, 1922, my manager, Mr. Lee Keedick, was round to tell us of his arrangements. There was not much time for preparation, for the Carnegie Hall had been engaged for Wednesday, and there my first efforts must be made. Keedick was a typical modern American business man of the best type—clean-shaven, steady-eyed, alert, and smiling. The difference between him and my old friend and manager, Major Pond, is typical of the very great change which has occurred in American manhood. The older generation was hirsute, angular, full of whimsical character, and humorous exaggeration, as different as possible from their quiet, efficient successors; but there was something which we used to consider typically American in the intense individuality of the men of the last century. The world is the poorer for their passing. It was sad to me to find how completely my friends of long ago had vanished. Mr. Melville Stone, Hamlin Garland, and Edward Bok seemed to be the only survivors.

Mr. Keedick had come to say that the New York Press would wait upon me at eleven o'clock, and sure

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enough at that hour in marched eighteen representatives, about a third of them ladies. They perched themselves round our sitting-room as best they might, and I, seated in an arm-chair in the centre, was subjected to a fine raking fire which would have shot me to pieces had I been vulnerable. But on this subject, though I say it myself, I am not vulnerable, for I have read so long and so earnestly, and have had so many first-hand experiences with the greatest mediums, that I can usually give reasons and facts upon every point. My knowledge, too, is accessible, for apart from an excellent memory which hardly ever fails me upon a matter which interests me, I carry my notebooks with me and can in an instant look up any reference. Finally, if I do not know a thing, I never hesitate to say so, which is the greatest of all protections. As a result, in five years of cross-examination I have hardly ever made a statement which I have had even to modify after I have made it. I touch wood as I write the words.

It was interesting to see what the points were which exercised the minds of these intelligent men and women. They wanted to know in detail what the personal experiences were which had made me so absolutely sure. Every now and then I had to laugh and say, "That's my lecture," or they would have prematurely emptied me. I was able, I think, to convince them that I was not a simple-minded person who has been deceived by fakers. The suggestion of senility cheerfully put forward by one or two antagonists who had not met me did not seem to cut any ice either. I have always been ready to box a friendly round with

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any one who desires reassurance upon this point. They wanted to be assured that it was really a fact that I took no personal profit out of my lectures. Then the conditions of the other world offered a boundless field for questions. Of course, the alcohol and cigars came up. I could only say that I had never personally heard any claim that such things existed. It has always seemed to me that one of the most startling passages in the New Testament is that in which the Christ speaks of wine in the beyond. Possibly some unfermented drink was in His mind, or possibly He only used the phrase as a synonym for making merry. The usual information is that any nutrition is of a very light and delicate order, corresponding to the delicate etheric body which requires it. Then there was the question of marriage, and the old proposition of the much-married man, and which wife he should have. As there is no sexual relation, as we understand it, this problem is not very complex and is naturally decided by soul affinity. As to the general prospect of man's salvation, the reporters got that humorous angle which is natural to the American.

" 'All ordinary decent people will find themselves in Paradise after death,' Sir Arthur insisted optimistically.

" 'I believe that every one in this room will go there,' he added, indicating the eighteen reporters present.

" 'The reporters looked somewhat doubtfully at each other.'

"Sir Arthur reassured them. 'You don't have to be so very good to get to heaven,' he said."

Perhaps as I re-read these reports, which after all

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are fairly accurate, I have erred in not making it clearer that there *are* causes, petrifaction of soul and bigotry above all others, which do delay man's salvation for very long periods. The man who centres upon some narrow creed is certainly in danger. But if I am too optimistic, it is in reaction against those horrible conceptions of a vengeful Deity which have shadowed so many lives.

It was good to get this ordeal over and be out with my family in the wonderful air of New York. It is remarkable how greatly the city has been improved since my first visit. The broad avenues, the smooth pavements and roadways, the splendid new buildings, impress the spectator. So do the police, who used to be fat, inefficient, and corrupt, but who now are as fine a force of clean-cut athletic young men as the world could show. There is a general air of prosperity, as may well be the case considering that nearly all the money in the world has been brought over here by the economic consequences of the war. This affluence is the only war-sign which one observes, for the mutilated men (though I have met one or two) are so few in comparison, and so lost in the large general population, that one does not observe them. The Kaiser's mark is only too common in Britain and in France and, I may add, in Australia.

We are too apt to forget, however, in Europe some of the unselfish work which the Americans did during the war. Few people realise, for example, that there were either one or two meatless days every week during which no butcher could open his shop. Butter and sugar were strictly rationed that there might be more

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for export. The quality of the bread was reduced and white bread could not be got in New York. Petrol was strictly rationed and there were days when no motor-car might run. These things were done at the crisis of the submarine danger, and if we got through that very dangerous time it was partly from the friendly help thus given. As to the debt questions: It is very easy to say that there should be complete remission all round, and no doubt there will be no general recovery until there is, but it should not be forgotten that all other nations which remit have also large balancing sums to be remitted, while America would give all and get nothing. This would, of course, make her concurrence all the more noble, but it surely justifies her hesitation. England would also have to make a sacrifice as great or even greater than America, for she owes about a thousand million abroad, while her credits abroad are several thousand million. A general amnesty would cost America only a little more than England. The world will have to rise to some mutual accommodation at last, and to understand that in so small a globe there is no possiblity of selfish isolation.

We have all been up in the Woolworth Building—shot up in something which was a cross between a lift and a Fat Bertha—so that you were not quite sure if you were merely elevated or projected into the air. One moment we were on the ground, and a few moments later, with one change on the way, at the 57th or topmost floor. It reminded me of a saying by my friend, the late Kendrick Bangs, that he hesitated whether to live in the suburbs of New York or in the

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top flat which he had rented. The journey was the same in either case, but one was horizontal, the other perpendicular.

The children, of course, were delighted. An old traveller told me once that his great maxim was always to go to the highest point of every city he visited, be it hill, steeple, or tower, and get a general idea before descending to detail. I have often found the idea a good one. On this occasion we saw that wonderful map laid out beneath us—the two rivers, the great harbours, the long, thin, tapering city, with the curved coast of Long Island, and the fields and houses of New Jersey stretching away to the southern horizon. It was a great introduction to the new world.

New York at the time of our arrival was in the throes of a crime wave. In the first ninety days of the year there had been ninety homicides in the city, an average of one per day, and there was no sign of abatement. Hold-ups were also common, and had extended from taxi-cabs to larger game, for a Broadway motor-bus was attacked shortly after our arrival. This remarkable wave of crime was not confined to New York, but was even greater in Chicago, and greater still, as I am informed, in St. Louis. It is very unfortunate for the advocates of Prohibition that this should have occurred at such a time, and that Sing-Sing, the State prison, should have been forced for the first time to confess that it could hold no more. I have been over it, and I know it to be a very commodious institution—very different from the Tombs in New York City, which is much more select.

I believe myself that the liquor question has nothing

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to do with the matter, save that it has not yet been completely enforced, and that more maddening forms of alcohol reach those who insist upon drinking. It is more prohibition, not less, which is needed if the real effects of prohibition, good or bad, are to be studied. The cause of the crime lies rather in the after-effects of the war, and the habits of unrest and violence which soldiering, or even economic disturbance, engenders. It cannot be denied, however, that at all times the United States has a most unenviable record of crime, which is the more amazing since the citizens whom you meet are conspicuous for their gentle courtesy and law-abiding habits.

There is a great deal of force in their contention that much of this violence comes from the undigested aliens, people of fiery natures and primitive passions, drunken with their newly acquired liberty. But making every allowance for this—and the names in the criminal courts sustain the argument—there still remains a great deal to account for. Hooligan gangs are commoner than with us, Italian, Irish, and American, which have feuds and wage guerilla warfare on each other, and as lethal weapons are subject to no tax or licence, these frays are serious. At election-time these gangs make themselves useful in attack or defence for various candidates, and the leader thus acquires some political influence. As the Judges are also temporary political appointments, this influence can often be used to postpone trials, manufacture evidence, and generally to save the member of the gang from his deserts.

A good fire-arms law with permanent magistrates

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and summary flogging or execution would soon, I am sure, put an end to the reign of violence. It urgently needs doing, for the present state produces a completely false idea as to the real quality of American civilisation.

Talking of hold-ups, there was one occasion when I think I really put the wind up a New York taxi-driver. I alighted from my cab, and immediately afterwards discovered that I had left some precious papers inside it. The vehicle had moved on and was in the great flood which pours down Fifth Avenue, but fortunately I was able to spot it among the others. I am not as active as I was, but I trotted along the footway with my eyes fixed upon my cab, to the considerable disturbance of the pedestrians with whom I collided. Presently, to my relief, I saw the cab disengage itself and turn into a side-street. Before it could gain speed I darted forward and without explanations took a flying jump onto the footboard. As this is an unusual way for passengers to approach, but quite normal for the hold-upper, the driver turned a horrified face upon me, and it took some explaining before I could make him see the matter from my point of view. But the precious papers—a goodly section of this record—were safely recovered.

And now came the night of our first ordeal—I can well say "our," as I like to have my wife at my side, and the second feels the fight more keenly than the principal. We had learned by the afternoon that the great hall, in spite of an abnormal heat-wave, was sold out, and that seats on the platform were already at a premium. I was kept waiting for a *mauvais quart*

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d'heure after the advertised time, while this great audience was settling down. When at last we were allowed to go, we had to thread our way through a long narrow lane among the packed crowd on the platform before at last we found the little clear space in front and saw that great sea of faces before us.

An old friend, the eminent American man of letters, Hamlin Garland, was in the chair, and filled it with tact and dignity. He did not conceal that he did not go all the way with me, but was rather in that half-way position taken by Professor Charles Richet, who admits all the phenomena, including even the independent existence of forms in the séance rooms, and yet hesitates at our explanation. Presently Garland sat down, and I was on my feet and facing the multitude. I had been warned to speak very slowly, as there is a difficulty here in understanding the British pronunciation, but my one virtue as an orator is audibility, and I had their ears and their very close attention from the first.

I had begun by saying that I was speaking about far the most important thing in the world, since it involved the fate of every man and woman in the audience. There was one proposition upon which every one would agree, and that was that our claim to have pierced the barrier of death was either the greatest delusion ever offered to the human race or else the greatest achievement ever done. I asked them to form themselves into a jury and I would state a case so that they might give a verdict.

My word, what a jury they made! Could ever an advocate desire so devoted a tribunal! It is no ex-

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aggeration to say that there was an absolute and complete hush, so that for an hour and a half I might, had I closed my eyes, have thought I was in an empty hall, save when there was a low gasp of emotion or a quick cry of assent. Those who were there will bear me witness that I do not exaggerate. After the first few words I felt quite impersonal and at my ease. It was not I—it never is I. It was always the compelling power which was working through me upon mankind, giving them that message which sooner or later is going to alter the whole world.

I began by showing them what overwhelming evidence there was for the physical phenomena, and how foolish and ignorant it was for people to deny them in the face of the deliberate conclusions of men like Hare, Mapes, Challis, Mayo, Russell Wallace, Crookes, Varley, Richet, Zollner, Lombroso, Barrett, Lodge, and all the others who had thoroughly examined the matter. I read the very words of many of these investigators, showing their exact position. I proved that the opponents had never really gone into the subject, but had formed their opinions from religious or scientific prejudice. Finally, I quoted Professor Hyslop's recent dictum that a man who denies these things is either ignorant or a moral coward. I felt that I had my audience with me.

Then I outlined my own search for truth and asked my listeners to check at what point I had been false to the facts. I showed how I had started from theistic materialism with absolute incredulity as to any life beyond this one. Then I showed my early psychic experiments, my long course of reading, my years of

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struggle against the facts, and my final forced acceptance of the phenomena, as described by all these great authorities, but without any recognition of their religious implications. What religion could there be in a jumping table or a flying tambourine? Then I showed how the war made us all more earnest, how evidence of psychic forces came into my own household, bringing the subject very close to me, and how, at last, I saw clearly that all these puerile phenomena were really signs and signals, calling attention in a material way, addressed to our material minds, to the spiritual messages which accompanied them.

I showed how those messages varied very little, whatever the means by which they were got, or whatever the land of their origin. I showed also that they constituted an organised philosophy and explanation of life and fate quite different from any held by the world before, but simple, reasonable, and credible, when once we had cleared our minds of its prepossessions and prejudices. I showed that it bore every sign of being a new revelation from God to man, sent to the human race at the hour of its need, but that in many ways it appeared to be the old primitive Christian message which had been misinterpreted and forgotten.

I gave a number of personal instances, how I had talked with my dead son, how my dead brother had given me the correct name of a healer in Copenhagen whom he wished his widow to consult, how I had clearly seen my mother beyond any doubt or question. Was I deceived in this and other cases which I cited? I showed that I had my witnesses all marshalled, six,

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eight, or ten who had been present and seen or heard as I did. How was anything on earth to be established if this was rejected? But if it was not rejected, and if it was found to exactly coincide with the experiences of hundreds of other competent observers, then what were the world and, above all, the Churches going to do about it? Was it not clearly their province, and a matter of overwhelming importance? If the proof was not enough, could it be denied that it was far greater and far more direct than that of any other religious event recorded in history? The witnesses were here now, thousands of them, ready and eager to give testimony. No religious system on earth could survive the destructive criticism which has not in the least shaken the psychic revelation. It was founded upon the rock of actual personal observation. Those who had not observed were like astronomers without telescopes; they had to accept the conclusions of those who had the necessary knowledge and instruments.

What were the tremendous facts which we had learned—the greatest addition to truth which had ever been sent through the Centre of all truth? They lay in the religious exposition which should form my next lecture. In the meantime, I was content if I had made it clear that there was a case to be examined. I wound up with such emotion as I might—though I would always give reason the preference to emotion—and finally sat down with a prayer of thanks in my heart that this, my first meeting, had at least laid the foundations of that spiritual and intellectual work which I had crossed the seas to accomplish. I have laid the

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general lines of argument before the reader with the promise that it will not be repeated, and that it is for the purpose of outlining once for all what the points were which rose up in the future lectures and discussions. I can hardly recount an adventure without once at least making it clear what it was that we were striving to do.

The most tiring thing of the whole evening was the crowd who flocked into the dressing-room before I could escape. I was very hot and exhausted, but could not get away from a number of good but rather inconsiderate people who had psychic difficulties which might have been deferred to some later date. Others were mere autograph hunters or people of that curious type who buzz up to you with tremendous concentration of purpose, and then find that they have really nothing to say, to the mutual embarrassment of interviewer and interviewed. I endeavoured to be patient and courteous, but I admit that it was a strain. Among the few whom I really welcomed was Mrs. Piper, the famous medium, a gentle elderly woman. Finally, my wife and Mr. Keedick cleared a passage, we pushed through to a cab, and so ended an eventful evening.

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CHAPTER III

A Splendid Press—Baseball—Its British Possibilities—An ex-Bandit—Prison Tortures—New York Prices—Twelve Shirt-waists—An Italian Medium—Paul Pry—The Religious Lecture.

The reports next morning were all that could be wished for by those who desired that this great subject should be ventilated in a fair and even sympathetic manner. Mr. Keedick, who was delighted at the result, assured me that a record had been broken, as for the first time three out of the five great New York dailies gave a lecture a whole column on the front page. The space in these papers, I may explain, is very carefully subdivided and corresponds closely to the public interest in any subject. The other papers had also splendid accounts, though in a less prominent position. Altogether the Press had treated me with great generosity.

Lest I may seem to have exaggerated the effect which my message had produced, let me interpolate a few short extracts from these notices, since I have no other way to prove my words. Mr. Heywood Broun, the special representative of the *New York World*, said:

"Sir Arthur Conan Doyle made an extraordinary impression last night at Carnegie Hall in his attempt to prove the existence of life after death and the possibility of communication with the dead. The effec-

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tiveness of his talk depended on the fact that in spite of the imagination of his writings, he seems to be a downright person. He does not look a man who could be easily stampeded. His audience was profoundly attentive. Evidently it was a crowd which had its dead."

Another, the *Tribune,* begins its account: "With the utmost earnestness Sir Arthur Conan Doyle impressed his belief in spirit communication on a large audience at Carnegie Hall last night. Scores of women in mourning were present, and tears were brought to the eyes of many when Sir Arthur told of his personal communication with his son."

Said *The Times:* "It was a quiet and solemn audience during part of the time that Sir Arthur delivered his lecture. Nearly every seat was taken ten minutes before he began, and lines were standing at the box-office windows buying standing-room. The audience, which numbered 3,500 people, evidently saw a manifestation of the coming of a newer and finer religion that would clear out most of the weeds in the old religions and show the human race what God has written down in His eternal law."

It was splendid to have so thorough a ventilation of the question, in this the greatest city of what is now the greatest nation in the world. What more in my wildest dreams could I ask for than this? I did not want sudden conversions. I did not desire that a great paper should shock its subscribers by getting ahead of their convictions. But I did want the general idea to get about that religion needed reform, that nothing could be done with the world until that reformation

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came, and that there was a body of people who claimed that for seventy years they had possessed the means, derived from other-world sources, of bringing about this reformation on practical but inspired lines. That knowledge is the first step towards the coming change.

There was a day or two of intermission, broken only by a rather colourless lecture at Brooklyn. I spent the time in looking up some of my old haunts and old friends with very indifferent success, for both were missing. Mr. Keedick introduced a touch of sport into our lives by taking us all to see the opening ball game of the season, where we rooted for the Giants who are a famous New York team. The match was against Brooklyn, who made a very poor show, though on their day they are, I understand, quite as good a team. The more I see of good baseball the more impressed I am by the great possibilities of the game and the place it might fill in England. It is the summer game of the young and active man, where no one finds a place who has not the supple joints of the thrower and sprinter. A man may stick to his cricket till he is fifty, but a baseballer is old and stale at thirty, in spite of Ty Cobb and a few examples to the contrary. The outstanding advantages are that it can be played on any fairly level field, that the outfit costs very little, and that the whole strenuous affair may be over in a couple of hours. Life is too serious now for games that last days on end. It has the additional merit of forming an excellent spectacle when once the points are understood, and there are none of those long, weary intervals when bowling is short and batsmen sticky. It would be an admirable thing if all our

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association professional teams, trained men in the pink of condition, engaged good American coaches, gave themselves up to the game, and played League matches against each other. I will venture to say, that if this was done, we should in a few years have as many to see a baseball final between Tottenham Hotspur and Preston North End as come now to the football. As to the furore which a decent British team, could we evolve one, would create in America, it is impossible to exaggerate it. The people seem to love not only the game, but the players, and the feeling of hero worship towards a famous pitcher or batsman can only be compared to that which we have all felt in our time for W. G. Grace. "Babe" Ruth, as he is playfully called, is the great hitter, but lately he has been a fractious babe, quarrelling with umpires, chasing spectators with his club, and getting periods of disqualification in consequence. A more pleasing figure is Matthewson, the greatest pitcher or bowler that the game has produced, who suddenly developed tubercle, and whose fluctuations of health in his sanatorium at the Adirondacks are now a matter of national concern. He has taken his misfortune with such philosophy and cheerful bravery that his example is really a fine one.

I had a visit one morning between my New York lectures from an ex-bandit. When I heard that Mr. Morrell had really been a bandit—or at least had been condemned as such—I had to conceal it from the children, as I was aware that they would regard him with speechless admiration. He proved, however, to be a very gentle, clean-shaven, open-faced man with a con-

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siderable charm of manner. The only indication which I observed of the truly frightful experiences which he has undergone was a curious, quick, furtive way of making gestures, so that when he wished to emphasise a point he seemed to wave his hand, snap his fingers, and rap the table all at the same instant.

He was as a boy a member of a Californian outlaw gang, and had been captured and condemned to life imprisonment in San Quentin. Here, as he was a high-spirited lad, he rebelled, and was, as a consequence, condemned to years of solitary life in a dark cell with occasional long spells of torture by the brutal jacket. He found that while under torture he could self-hypnotise himself, and separate his etheric body, which used to live a separate life and a very pleasant one, while his poor natural body was cramped and twisted in this horrible machine, the use of which is, or was, a sad blot upon the prison record of California. The experiences of Morrell have been wonderfully set forth in Jack London's book called *The Star Rover* in America and *The Jacket* in England. He assured me that his extra-corporeal wanderings had entirely convinced him of the essential truth of spiritualism, and that he had actually been able to establish friendships with discarnate souls during his terrible ordeal. His condition after these long bouts, when he was strapped in for days as tightly as three strong men could lace him into the leather or canvas covering, must have been such that it is marvellous that he retained his reason. The ulcers caused by uric acid alone made a formidable addition to his pains. Of Morrell I shall have more to say hereafter.

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During this time, and indeed throughout our tour, we experienced to the full that hospitality for which America is famous. A stranger put his motor-car at our constant order. Numerous invitations both from private individuals and from public bodies poured in. It was, of course, impossible to accept them and yet to do the strenuous work which the mission entailed, but I can here assure my friends that we were by no means unmindful of their kindness.

I wish we could see more British travellers over there. It would be good for our insular mentality, and good also for the Americans if our people were only of the right type. Unhappily, travellers are so often caricatures of the nations which they represent. Of course the difference in exchange makes travelling difficult, but the sterling is drawing up and it will not be long before we get level once more, with five good full dollars for the British pound. Travel here need not be very expensive. There is a good deal of exaggeration over the matter. You have, of course, to choose your hotel and your room. In London if you wish to economise you don't take a suite at Claridge's. For the modest traveller there are good hotels in New York where ten shillings will house him for the night. Food, if one picks one's dishes, is not much more than in London. The cabs, which I was told were only used by millionaires, are really not dear, and the ordinary run does not cost more than two or three shillings. The men are very polite, and a dime or two above the price on the metre is all they expect. Railways and busses are as cheap as with us. My wife tells me that ladies' requisites, espe-

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cially hats, are much cheaper and better than in London. I fear from our experiences both in Paris and in New York that we breed the worst lot of profiteers of any capital city.

English ladies have to remember that every country has its own methods of doing business. In New York, when we had a flying visit just before the war, my wife asked the shopman to send a dozen blouses to the hotel that she might try them on. The shopman stared, but with American politeness he obeyed. One blouse was duly chosen and paid for. The other eleven were returned. The beautifully regulated machinery of the shop had no little cogwheel, however, by which to record such an unusual transaction. Exceptions simply don't occur in a well-oiled business. Therefore it was that in a couple of days I received a bill "Towards twelve blouses" (or "shirt-waists," I think they called them) "120 dollars." I explained. But there was no department for such explanations, so by the time we reached Montreal a more pressing bill arrived "Towards twelve shirt-waists," etc., etc. I wrote. When we reached our destination in the Rocky Mountains yet another summons, more abrupt and angry, came after us: "Towards Twelve Shirt-waists . . ." I was fed up with shirt-waists by that time and took no notice, but I have no doubt that to this day I am marked as a defaulter who has escaped with twelve shirt-waists for which he never paid. Moral—do in a country as the country does.

On the whole the American shops are excellent, though they seem under-staffed and the service is not so quick as in London. They have amusing ways of

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attracting customers. I copied this card from a window near the Ambassador Hotel:

FLOWERS FOR SALE
TEA TO DRINK
A PSYCHO-ANALYST TO CONSULT
A REGULAR PARTY
DO COME!

On April 14th we had been asked by a Psychic Research body, in which my friend Dr. Allerton Cushman, of Washington, was interested, to attend a séance in order to test a young Italian named Pecoraro, who was supposed to have psychic powers. He was a stunted under-nourished youth with a face of premature age and could only speak a few words of English. Two Italian females of his own class were with him, and the party was brought by Dr. Vecchio, a skilled psychic observer and a man of high scientific attainment who has already written a book upon this subject. I was impressed by Vecchio as a very competent experimenter. The other sitters were Dr. Cushman, Dr. H. Carrington, a Persian gentleman named Kervorkian, two young ladies whose names I did not catch, my wife and myself. A cabinet had been erected at one end of the séance-room in the Psychical Institute, and in it the medium was placed. It was merely a screen of curtains, and the idea is that it holds in those vaporous materials which are the raw material of psychical manifestations. The lights were turned down—ectoplasm dissolves in light—and we waited for some time in patient expectation, with only a dim

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red lamp to cast its glimmer in the gloom. Suddenly a perfect scream came from the cabinet, thin and keen and vibrant. "Aida! Aida!" were the words. It was so sudden that it made us all jump in our chairs. We hoped it was the beginning of some great manifestation. The name, I understand, was that of one of the Italian women present, and the cry was supposed to come from some deceased relative, for some words were added which were said to mean this. The woman was absolutely terrified, however, and whinnied with fear when asked to come close to the cabinet. This seemed to damp down the phenomena, which now took a merely physical turn, the table being dashed about in all directions, possibly to signify the impatience of the spirit at the backwardness of the girl. "Oh, no, no, no!" she howled, when asked to get near the cabinet. There was a strong cool breeze, the sure sign of real psychic power. Do not these psychic air-vibrations throw a light on the constant request from spirits that we sing or play and so keep the waves moving? The table was now jumping about and several articles were thrown out from the cabinet, including the medium's collar and belt. His hands were supposed to have been securely fastened by wire, but I could not guarantee that they could not reach these articles. Then the name "Palladino" was given, and we were told that the famous medium was present. Again we had great hopes and again we were disappointed. In vain we played up to Palladino, welcomed her, spoke of her past. A voice from the cabinet said in Italian: "I who used to call back the spirits now come back as a spirit myself." I said, "Palladino,

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we send you our love and our best encouragement." The curtains seemed to blow outwards towards us and for a time we had hopes of a materialisation. But again the force was dissipated in the absurd and violent dancings of the table. It was very disappointing, but nothing more could be done, and after two hours we were compelled to break off. The young Italian's pulse was slow and steady, but it was fifteen minutes before we got him out of his trance. It was not, it must be admitted, a very successful sitting, but when we consider the strange surroundings, it was not quite a failure. I thought the youth was a true medium and might develop into something remarkable. Since then Dr. Vecchio has been able to get very good photographs of ectoplasm, issuing in a long coil from the cabinet in which he was bound.

This séance was a remarkable example of the Paul Pry powers of the New York Press. Every one in the room who could speak English was aware that the occasion was a private one—and this not because there was anything to conceal but because free and frank comment and discussion become impossible so long as every word may be reported in print. Next day, a full and accurate report did actually appear in one paper, with the copyright mark below it, to show that it had been duly paid for. Such are the incidents which make one cautious in America.

On the afternoon of Tuesday, April 18th, came my second lecture, upon the religious aspects of the matter. As it was more philosophic and less sensational than the phenomenal side I had expected a smaller audience, but the hall was full, and the people were

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quite as sympathetic as before. The phenomena interest me very little, nor am I attracted much by the scientific side of the question. One might as well, it seems to me, be keenly interested in how the loaves and fishes fed the multitude, but give no heed to the Sermon on the Mount. Therefore, I can put a good deal more fire and earnestness into this religious lecture than into the other. I hope that I passed this on to my audience. I explained that the actual messages were the only things that mattered. I showed that their veracity was guaranteed first by their being mixed up with the preternatural phenomena, which were really only of importance as a sign and a signal. I instanced the agreement of the messages by examples from all parts, and showed how the whole philosophy of religion given by a child in New York in the book *Revelations of Louise,* which I had just been reading, was the exact philosophy which I was preaching, although the child could have known nothing of it. The agreement of witnesses establishes truth. I then took the soul at the time of death and described all that occurred to it, and in what place and condition it found itself, confirming my descriptions by extracts from séance messages, some of them received in my own home circle, and all corroborating each other. I gave a detailed description of the lower heavens, and discussed the question of crime and punishment, showing the exaggerations of the theologians—wicked exaggerations which have clouded so many lives and built up so horrible a conception of God. At the same time, the reality as described by Swedenborg, Davis, Vale Owen, and other seers was quite bad enough, though

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chastening and purgatorial in its nature. When I said that the average human being, hard-worked and ill cared for, deserved compensation rather than punishment, there were hearty cheers of assent. "Comfort ye! Comfort ye, My people!" That was the message which God sent and which the times demanded. It was our own man-made theology which draped our future with terrors. The Churches had lost all contact with the spirit. They were like trucks running with their own momentum from an impulse 2,000 years old, but gradually and visibly stopping. Only the old engine of actual Spiritual Inspiration would restart them and carry them on for thousands of years to come.

Again I can only gauge my effect from the kind messages in letters and from the splendid notices in the Press. Said the *Globe:*

"Calmly, forcefully, and impressively, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle delivered his message to the American people. Facing an audience of 3,500 that completely filled Carnegie Hall, the newest exponent of spiritualism told in simple, direct language of his experience in the realm of the psychic. No cult ever had a more engaging proponent. In a clear manner, Sir Arthur told about conditions after death. He never argued, he never preached, he never shouted, he never condemned. He said simply, 'I saw and I know.' 'It is so' or 'It is not so.' The audience followed him with the most assiduous attention."

The *Evening Mail* said: "No such convincing evidence on this subject has ever been presented to a New York audience."

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Said the *Tribune:* "An audience that packed Carnegie Hall to its utmost limit applauded enthusiastically when Sir Arthur Conan Doyle said at the conclusion of his lecture, 'I hope I have convinced you that there is method in my madness and that there is reason underlying all this which I have shown you.' "

Those at a distance might sneer, but I was able to convince those who listened to me that the thing was true, because I was personally convinced that it was true from my own experience. So strong is the argument from the agreement of witnesses, from the checking furnished by our own terrestrial experience, and from the innate reasonableness of the whole scheme when soberly stated, that I have often wondered whether the time is not coming when we may abandon the phenomena altogether as an argument, and take our stand entirely upon the splendidly clear and definite explanation of the universe furnished by our new revelation.

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CHAPTER IV

The Photographic Lecture—Ectoplasm in New York—Fraudulent Medium—The Direct Voice—Prohibition—An Amateur Medium—Analysis of Evidence—Wallace Widdecombe.

My photographic lecture followed immediately after my religious one, and it set the absolute seal of success upon my enterprise, for it created such surprise and interest that I had to repeat it three times more in New York before I left. Thus, if I include the Brooklyn lecture, I filled great halls on seven occasions in the one city, which is an absolute record. The record was held before by Sir Oliver Lodge with six lectures, so it is clear that psychic subjects present a strong appeal to the public and that there is a vehement desire for information.

The American public had never taken psychic photography seriously, having been "doped," as they would themselves express it, by all the ridicule and slander which have been spent upon the subject. When put face to face with it their native common sense at once asserted itself, and both pressmen and public understood that the wholesale charge of fraud was quite untenable and unreasonable. The course of the contention has been this. Says the Spiritualist, "We can in the presence of certain people get impressions of the features of the 'dead.'" Says the Sceptic, "Where are they?" "Here by the hundred," says the Spiritualist, and produces them. "But those are fakes."

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"How then are they produced?" "Oh, by substitution of plates, superposition of negatives, and so on." "We have guarded against all that." "You have not guarded well enough." "But the pictures represent the dead beyond all question or doubt in some of the cases, and they differ from any existing photographs. In many cases the relatives agree that they are more like than any taken in life. What then?" And there the Sceptic is silent, or talks falsely of "blurs" and "blotches." We have then received an absolutely final proof of abnormal powers, and all talk of fakes and frauds is for ever beside the point. Even if these mediums were to cheat in other cases, still the existence of these good likenesses presents proof of at least occasional psychic powers which nothing can alter.

The Americans soon saw the force of such an argument. They understood that a hundred negative results cannot explain away a single positive one and its implications. I showed them some forty photographs and explained the guarantees of truth in each case.

I also explained to them all that had been done about ectoplasm, and showed some of the Crawford-Bisson-Notzing photographs. It took me an hour and three quarters, but I think I ended with the mental acquiescence of all my audience. They were especially impressed by the case of Dr. Cushman of Washington, who was actually in the audience. He called upon Mrs. Deane at the Psychic College in London without any appointment or introduction, and he got beside his own face, that of his daughter Agnes, who had

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died a year or so before. It was a living likeness, better than and yet unlike any taken in life. Surely any reasonable man will agree that this case, though only one of many, is in itself absolutely conclusive and proves for all time that Mrs. Deane is a true psychic photographer, though why her atmosphere should be more helpful than that of another to get this result remains, of course, a most obscure problem. There have been a succession of people from the days of Mumler in 1861 who have claimed this power, and I do not myself think that, with the possible exceptions of Buguet, the Frenchman, and Fallis of Chicago, there is one of them who was not a perfectly genuine medium, though I know that there is many a pitfall there for the researcher.

As usual the Press notices were most full and sympathetic. The *New York Times* said: "To an audience which filled every seat in Carnegie Hall, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle showed spirit photographs of every kind —men, women, and children, landscapes and birds— taken with the greatest precautions against fraud. Many were strangely pathetic. One ghost, plainly transparent, was seated beside a printed page containing five verses of St. Mark's Gospel in Cingalese, a language unknown to the medium."

The *New York World* said: "As on former occasions, the immense audience listened to what Sir Arthur Conan Doyle had to say with most profound respect. Nobody doubts all that he said except a very ignorant person."

There was hardly a word of adverse criticism anywhere, and all the preposterous theories which bring

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psychic research into contempt—the explanations of ectoplasm by chewed paper or wax or other absurdities —were quite absent from the Press.

One remarkable result of the publicity given was that whereas ectoplasm had apparently never been taken seriously in America before, there were now speedy signs that it was not a purely European product. One lady sent me several photographs taken of herself which showed ectoplasmic masses, which in one case were forming themselves into a head protruding from her own, exactly like the heads formed by or near Eva. Another experimenter sent me several excellent photographs of ectoplasmic rods, very much like those described by Crawford. Two of the rods have little claws or suckers clearly visible at the end, which are used, according to Crawford, to grip distant objects, and so explain the movements of material things in the presence of an ectoplasmic medium. I may say that I have myself in London seen, in the full light of a candle, a disc of wood violently wobbling and turning with no one within six feet of it. Had ectoplasm been visible to the eye I would no doubt have seen the little rods which caused the effect, though these rods are probably transmitters of force rather than the force itself.

It makes one's heart sick to see the villainy with which this heaven-sent truth is surrounded. I suppose it is so ordained that we may have the merit of using our own brains, and not be deterred from good because evil obtrudes itself. We had one evening at New York with a materialising and voice-producing pair of mediums, Mr. and Mrs. Thompson. I had

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been warned against them, but the minister of the Spiritualist Church, an excellent man, was of opinion that they had been misjudged and so we went. Both my wife and I together with two friends whom I took (one of them Mr. Stefansson, the famous Arctic explorer) were of opinion that the proceedings were very suspicious and we came away deeply dissatisfied, for there were no test conditions and no way of checking such manifestations as we saw. Some days afterwards these two so-called mediums were seized by the New York police in open fraud. I do not think that any punishment could be too severe for rogues of this kind. The old saying that the unforgivable sin was the sin against the Holy Ghost seems to me to apply exactly. I trust that the American Spiritualists will not condone or try to cover up such scandals. The rotten twigs must come off. When the man was doing the direct voice I put my hand on his larynx, and could say with confidence that it was working, and that beyond all doubt the voice was coming from himself. I am so distrustful of direct-voice phenomena, and so convinced that the natural voice can be projected without apparent movement, that I should never be impressed by the mere voice alone, but only by the information which it conveyed. This on many occasions within my experience has been absolutely final in its proofs. It is only when several voices are speaking simultaneously—a phenomenon which I have observed with Mrs. Wriedt, Evan Powell, Mrs. Robert Johnson, and others—that one can safely say that the sounds alone, apart from the messages, are surely supernormal.

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What I say of the direct voice applies equally to automatic writing. There also it is the message delivered and not the mere fact of writing which is of consequence. I cannot see how one can avoid all the snags of subconscious action, and the possible dramatisation of latent personalities, which would account for the writing itself. It is only by the information conveyed, its accuracy, and its remoteness from the normal mind of the medium that we can gain assurance. But there is no form of mediumship which is more tricky, and even when we have established that it is independent of the medium we still have to guard against possible deception from the spirit-control—a very real source of error.

The most urgent question at present in New York as in all America is that of Prohibition, and the visitor is brought very squarely up against it from the first moment of his arrival. I enjoy a glass of good wine in season, but neither my wife nor I have been regular drinkers of alcohol, so we have found it no intolerable privation to be without it. I don't care, however, about being forced into virtue, and I feel about wine as Barrie felt about the dictionary, that "even if he did not use it he liked to feel that it was there." Still, I admit that there is something very noble in a great nation saying, "Many of us enjoy our wine, but we are prepared to give it up, and make this sacrifice of our habits and comfort, in order that all the crimes and poverty which come from the abuse of drink may be done away with." Surely no one can deny that such an attitude is fine, and America leads the world by its action. But is it really necessary

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to be so drastic? Why should extremists always have their way? Might we not preserve the social amenities and the pleasant varieties of experience which light forms of alcohol give, and yet shut off those stronger drinks which make for intoxication? I should personally favour such a law, even if it were to be only a half-way house.

The main objection to it is that it would reopen to some extent the saloon, which is now shut down, and which was always a centre of evil. That, however, could surely be met in some way. Europeans must not make too much of the bootlegging and illicit drinking which bulk so large in the papers. Reformers have always reckoned on years of unrest, and are prepared to wait for full realisation of their hopes when the new generation arises. At present, liquor can always be got, but you have to go out of your way to pay a high price, to accept an inferior article and occasionally to run a risk, so that there is no inducement unless a man is very inclined that way. I have seen flasks drawn out occasionally, and I have seen a lady produce a cocktail in the course of a dinner as if it were a conjuring trick. Twice when I dined out I found wine on the table, and once a friend told me that he had a small illicit consignment and was puzzled how to conceal it. I volunteered to conceal a small fraction of it for him. But save for these small adventures, we never came into contact with alcohol at all during the three months of our wanderings. We carried two bottles of medical comforts with us all the way, and gave them to friends as parting presents when we left. One curious remark fre-

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quently made is that every crook in the country is now a Prohibitionist, since the law has opened up smuggling careers for him which mean more money than he has ever handled.

On April 16th we had a sitting with Mr. Ticknor, a well-known amateur medium, on the invitation of Mrs. Cogswell, who afterwards furnished us with a verbatim account of the proceedings taken by a stenographer. This is a wonderful help in checking a séance, for the best notes—and I usually take notes—are very inadequate. There were several sitters and Stefansson came with us once again. As I look over the notes now the results seem to me remarkably accurate. Mr. Ticknor is a stoutish, rather Pickwickian figure, kindly, clean-shaven, and true to type as an American business man. Sitting in an arm-chair, he closed his eyes, breathed hard through his nose, and in a minute was in a deep state of what we must, I suppose, call self-hypnosis. There was agitation and contortion of the face and apparent spasms of pain or emotion before he reached an equilibrium. Then in a deep grumbling voice he began to talk, the words professing to come from the usual Indian control, Black Hawk in this instance. He spoke for nearly two hours, chatting with us, joking, introducing other spirits, answering questions, and in all ways playing up to the part. He gave the names of a dozen people at least upon the other side who had messages for my wife or for me—about equally divided between us—and every one of these names did really represent some one who had lived. The proceedings showed an intimate knowledge of my family history, so intimate that even if it could have

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been gathered from several books of reference, one could hardly imagine that it could all be carried in the memory and used with such unhesitating fluency and accuracy. John Doyle, my grandfather, Richard, my uncle, Charles, my father, Mary, my mother, Kingsley, my son, each spoke quite clearly about our relations. My grandfather said, "I saw you last when you were a little boy in 1868, a few months before my death." Quite true. A patient of Southsea days came back. Goodman came through as the name. He gave the date as 1888. I had a favourite patient named Woodman at that time. I said, "I hope I was not the cause of your passing over." He laughed heartily at this, for merriment is by no means excluded. Malcolm Leckie, my very dear brother-in-law, gave his name. He said that he had started for the front from Blackheath. This was news to me, but it proved to be correct. I could only trace two absolute mistakes, one of which may have been a misunderstanding. The control gave the impression of being surrounded by importunate spirits, for he kept muttering, "Very good!" "Wait your turn!" and so on, just as I have heard Sutton and others do in England. Altogether a man would be incapable of reason if he were not impressed by the whole performance, though some minds are so peculiar that a single mistake seems to do away with everything else, however successful. They do not consider that if we were seated as a go-between and were surrounded by twenty or thirty people, all giving various messages, which they wanted transmitted, we also would probably make a slip now and again. Stefansson's results were very definite,

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but he did not seem able to check them as clearly as we, for they dealt with more remote ancestry. The Indian control had lived near Fort Garry, now Winnipeg, where he died in 1876. Stefansson knew the place, so the Indian mentioned several names, especially a Dr. Macpherson, but as Stefansson was only born in 1879, no common ground could be found, so that Stefansson was impressed rather by our experience than by his own.

In a later stage of our adventures we come across this remarkable medium again, and then I will discuss more fully my final convictions as to his powers, their limitations, and their source.

I had now most successfully completed my opening campaign in New York. Other extra lectures, to meet the great demand, were to be fitted in later. Meanwhile, my schedule was fixed for New England, and off to Boston I went, to see if I could get my message across in what has so long been the centre of American literary culture. I left the family in their very comfortable quarters of the Ambassador Hotel, and, accompanied only by Captain Widdecombe, the very efficient aide-de-camp furnished by Mr. Keedick, I set forth on this new adventure.

But let me give one little paragraph to Wallace Widdecombe before I start, since then and afterwards he was always the silent, often invisible background of my narrative. I have a clear vision of him as I look back. Widdecombe with the rakish hat, Widdecombe the *débonnaire*, Widdecombe kneedeep amid luggage, haranguing negro porters with his bundle of tickets in one hand and his cigarette in the other.

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In many guises I can see him, watching me with dark solicitous eyes, as the trainer watches the pugilist, staring with questioning gaze at the intrusive pressman, holding me back as I endeavour to stride on to the platform while the box-office is still besieged, romping with the children, appearing with huge bundles of letters and a gentle request for an hour's attention. However I see him he is always quiet, always alert, always efficient. He had been adjutant to a Rifle battalion in the war, though he had joined up as a civilian of fifty. You are fit to be the aide-de-camp of a viceroy, Widdecombe, but all the same I hope you won't come into your own until I am sure whether I am likely to want you as a comrade in America once again.

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CHAPTER V

Boston Once Again—Two Clerical Mediums—The Early Christian Tradition—Weird Interviewers—A Farmer Medium—Mrs. Soule—Floreat Etona—Message from Myers—Dr. Holmes—Alchemists and Ectoplasm—Christian Science—Bunker Hill.

Here I was in Boston again after twenty-eight years. Save for the gilded dome of the State House I should hardly have known the place. Gone or thrust into a corner and dwarfed are the dear old crooked streets of faded brick in which a European felt at home. It is now rich and broad and spacious. It seems to have gained the whole world and lost some of its own soul. Miles of motor-factories and sale-shops line the busy thoroughfares. Commerce has triumphed. But where now are the Parkmans, the Emersons, the Lowells, the Longfellows, all the wonderful circle which for a time put New England above old England in culture? Boston then was a world-force. No doubt it will be so again. But much of the good old stock has moved to the Middle West, and no one can wonder at it who sees the barren and boulder-studded farms from which they have gone. Has culture gone with them? A young friend of mine at Harvard assures me that it is not so, and that a great school, mainly of poetry, is springing up there, the fame of which has not yet reached us in Europe. Well, maybe so. Anyhow, somewhere in America the old literary blood must linger and must from time to time ferment into im-

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mortal production. At present, however, it seems very quiescent.

I plunged instantly into spiritual exploration, and on Sunday I visited church three times, and was forced to address the congregation each time, so that my much-needed day of rest did not come up to expectation. But I was repaid by what I saw, and by the fine, sane, well-groomed, and well-balanced spiritualist audiences who listened kindly to my exhortation to be broad in our ideals, charitable to each other's views, and merciless to those who lower our standards of conduct. Two of my visits were to the church of Mr. Wiggin, and one to that of Mr. Nicholson, the latter an Englishman from Huddersfield.

Mr. Nicholson is a fine clairvoyant and claims that among other spirits who assist him is that of William Terriss, whom I had met in the flesh before his lamented murder. Such a statement cannot be checked, but what can be checked, and will bear checking, is that he pours out a stream of apposite messages to his congregation, containing names and knowledge which he can get by no normal means. It is, of course, only the old "discerning of spirits" named by Paul as one of the signs of a true gospel teacher, but the Churches have wandered so far away from early-Christian ideas that it stands out now as a wonderful novelty. No one could be present and have the least doubt of the honesty of the gift, though I suppose that, like all spiritual powers, it ebbs and flows.

Even more wonderful was Mr. Wiggin. His audience had sent him up innumerable notes with questions for their dead. The pastor sat with the papers

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heaped before him. He wore a pair of opaque spectacles. Sitting beside him and watching him closely I could see that there was no trick of any kind, though I had no assurance that the paper he was holding was always the one that he was answering. He dealt with about thirty, and the appearance of the people who admitted the correctness of the answers made collusion quite impossible. The exactness of the detail was wonderful.

I was the least fortunate, as a spirit came without a name and giving only the clue that his left shoulder was injured. Beyond my brother breaking his collar-bone hunting, I could make nothing of this and had to write it off as a failure, but it was one of the very few which could be so described.

Sometimes there were comic touches at both sittings. "Your wife is here. She tells me you got rid of the furniture after her death. You gave it away, did you not?"

"Well, practically," said the widower in a gloomy voice, and every one laughed.

So they did also when Mr. Wiggin called some name, and received in reply an explosive "Yip!" which told how eagerly the inquirer was waiting for his answer.

It was all an example of what St. Paul meant when he said that he taught the Gospel not merely by words but also by power. So long as a clergyman and medium can be united in one person, all is simple. I fancy that the trouble in the early Church began when they were twain and opposed. In the third century "two discreet women for prophecy"—which

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meant general psychic service—were attached to each Christian Church. So says the *Apostolic Constitution,* which though a forgery for the first century, stands as an authority for the third, in which it was written.

Mr. Wiggin has a claim for another phase of mediumship which is both more interesting and more questionable. It is that at times the greatest of all world-figures, Jesus of Nazareth, descends to the earth-plane and uses him as a means of communication.

Greatly daring, he has actually published a book recently, *The Living Jesus,* which embodies such messages. I have read the book carefully and no one can deny that it consists of high teaching for which the world would be much the better. So much is certain. Equally certain is it that the mode of expression is that of an American pastor. This is no final argument against its authenticity, as in all cases where the medium is not in deep trance messages are given rather in complete thoughts to be expressed by the writer than in actual verbatim sentences.

In the very nature of things it is impossible to test such a claim, but I admit it is disillusioning to the reader when in a discourse which alludes to Martha and Mary he comes upon expressions such as "most always" or "way back."

I am quite convinced of Mr. Wiggin's psychic power and of his honesty in the matter, but it is very possible that a teacher on the other side may personate something higher than himself in order to give force to his utterance. One can only say that the book is edifying, and leave it at that.

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I have reason to know that Mr. Wiggin's own congregation is sharply divided upon the issue, so much so that a big storm seemed to me to be brewing.

It is amusing to watch the genesis of some wild statement in the Press. I hope that the public does not take seriously all that I am reported to have said, or they may feel with Bishop Barry that I should be placed under restraint.

It works like this. Enter a very young and frivolous female reporter. "Well now, Mr. Doyle, say! Do they have golf in the next world?" She has come to make you say they have, as it has occurred to the sub-editor that it would make a good headline. Fight as you may, you will most certainly have to say it, "No," you answer, "I have no reason to say that." "You never heard them speak of golf?"

"No, I never have." "Well, you said they had amusements."

"Yes, they say they have more than we." "Well, maybe golf is among them." "I never heard them say so." So runs the interview.

Next morning you open the paper.

"Doyle says they play golf in Heaven."

Possibly there is a leaderette to say how wild is all this talk. One has to harden one's heart and just go ahead trusting to first principles. Indeed on the whole I have very little to complain of. The Press has treated me royally, and many of the interviews were both accurate and very clever as impressionist sketches.

On Monday, April 24th, I had my first Boston meeting at Symphony Hall. The house was full but not packed. I fear New York has spoiled me and I want

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"capacity" always. A Boston audience is very like an Edinburgh one, reserved, dignified, silent, and yet splendidly responsive in a very subtle way, if only by the total absence of movement or sound.

"Spell-bound," said the papers next day, a condition hard to maintain for an hour and a half. I had no chairman, and spoke without notes, but felt much uplifted and very confident. All the comments were as kind as possible.

I aim at inquirers rather than converts, and I am sure I got those by the hundred. I mentioned Mr. Wiggin and Nicholson by name, so I hope their psychic powers will meet with more attention.

I felt nearly worn out that night, with the incessant strain. If it were not for the splendid cut-off which Captain Widdecombe forms, I could not get through. I wish I had a spare evening to go to Concord, which is twenty miles away. There is a little farmer there, named Voss, who seems to be one of the greatest mediums in the world. I had a full description from an evangelical clergyman named Garrett, who had sat with him many times. The phenomena comprise materialisation, levitation, and indeed everything.

Voss does not go into trance, and is said to be more interested in his asparagus and his cows than in psychic matters. He is seventy-one, hale and hearty, and takes no fees.

I am told that both the late William James and W. D. Howells have sat with Voss and were entirely converted by what they saw. It is these folk who are close to nature who are nearest to spirit. The fisherman makes the apostle. By the way, James was a

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Swedenborgian by birth, so he had not to travel far to get the truth.

While at Boston I went to consult the clairvoyante medium, Mrs. Soule, who, under her former name of Chenoweth, gave some very good results to the American Psychical Research Society. It was ten in the morning, and my advent perhaps a little disturbing, so that the conditions were not very good and the results indifferent, but there were flashes which showed the real power.

For example, the announcement that my son was present moved me not at all; but when she said that he wrote down the word "Floreat," I had to take it seriously since he was an Eton boy, and "Floreat Etona" is the motto of the college. It seemed a fine test and beyond all chance, and yet do what we would—and we tried hard—we could not get the Etona. I think the less you try the better you do, and we spoiled our own results. There lies one of the dangers of test séances where every one is on edge. In several cases the messages applied more closely to others than to those who were supposed to send them.

There was a considerable mix-up, and yet several very vivid pictures of truth. Among other things I had a long message purporting to come from Mr. F. W. H. Myers, which I copied word by word, as the medium slowly read it off. It must be admitted that it has a weight and dignity:

"You have gone a step farther than I, but we are working on the same problem which is now one of paramount interest to the Church and its followers, even though they strive to elude the issue, and there

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is no more necessary work than to get these people to see that you are making possible for them a larger field of usefulness.

"You may knock down their steeples but you put a foundation under their places of worship, and only the blind fail to see the dignity of the message you are delivering. Do not think that we are far behind you in this effort to make real the contacts between the living and the dead.

"I believe that the attitude you have assumed is the only true and helpful one for the advance of the Kingdom of God. I wish I could stand by your side in the body just to give you that satisfaction that comes from feeling that the old workers do not desert the new ones."

Does that diction suggest Myers, the scholar, or Mrs. Soule, the simple average New England woman? I say Myers. I then asked him if he came in spirit-form on my platforms.

"Yes, and have been seen standing by you by some friends who were present."

Now, Mr. Slater afterwards said at Philadelphia that he saw Myers beside me. This was not finally evidential, but at the lowest it was very suggestive. I had much comfort from the whole interview, the messages coming in a high falsetto voice and purporting to be from Sunbeam, the little control, while Mrs. Soule lay back in her chair with closed eyes.

On my second morning at Boston I had a quiet hour in the Mount Auburn Cemetery, where the old clothes of many great ones are stored. Especially I wished to leave some flowers upon my favourite essayist, one

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of my spiritual and literary fathers, Oliver Wendell Holmes.

The gentle laughing philosopher, whether as autocrat, poet, or professor, made a very deep mark upon my young mind. Glorious fellow, so tolerant, so witty, so worldly-wise, and yet so simply fresh! I laid my flowers and was happier to know that he was probably aware of what I had done, for the little wireless trills seem to be very subtle and sure.

Coming back I saw the Lowell House, the Longfellow House, the Dana House—what a colony!

On my way from Mount Auburn I spent some time in the Harvard library, consulting some old alchemical books which seem to allude directly to ectoplasm, showing that these mediæval philosophers were really a good deal ahead of us in some phases of psychic knowledge. This interesting line of thought was first developed by Mr. Damon, a young assistant professor at Harvard.

He shows that the alchemists wrapped up their knowledge in symbols, for fear of the Church, but that when the symbols are learned it all corresponds with our knowledge. For example, the sun means the magnetic operator and the moon the mesmerised subject. The fire is the magnetic force. The mercury is the ectoplasm.

They describe it, viscous, half animal, half spiritual, everywhere and yet unseen, changeable, and so on. There cannot be the least doubt that they all allude to ectoplasm.

Their experiments seem to have been attended by danger, and I expect that we shall hit a few unex-

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pected snags in that direction. Thomas Vaughan, an alchemist who lived as lately as 1650, records in his diary that he obtained what seems to have been ectoplasm from his wife, but adds that his wife died the same night. His own death is recorded as having been from "an explosion of mercury," which sounds suspicious.

I have no doubt that perils will be encountered on this line of study, but it will no more deter the students than the dangers of aviation or the X-rays have done. Some of the talk of the alchemists is very intriguing. They speak of the black, the white, and the peacock's tail as three of the stages of knowledge.

We have found black ectoplasm (*vide* the Appendix of Schrenck-Notzing's book), and white is normal, but the peacock's tail is a problem. No doubt now that we are on the track we shall clear the matter up in time. I fear that the old boys had a touch of evil black magic in their researches.

The idea that it was gold that they were after was sometimes put forward to blind the Church, who approved of material but not of spiritual research.

It is a curious point, though possibly a coincidence, that on the very day when I was puzzling over the peacock's tail of the alchemists I received a letter from a man who had gone through a death-like trance.

The following is one sentence from the account:

"I tried to look around at my surroundings, but I could see nothing but an immense peacock's tail, which was very beautiful and big, and maybe half a block in length."

At the same time I met a gentleman named Stein-

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metz in the Copley Plaza Hotel who told me of a remarkable personal experience. He had practically died once in a cataleptic attack, and the doctor deposed that the pulse had completely stopped for seven minutes. During this time he had a very vivid experience. He saw before him curved gates ("like the big lock in the Panama Canal"), and these were studded all over with brilliant precious stones.

The total effect must have been like an outspread peacock's tail. These gates slowly opened, and he saw within an innumerable company, tier above tier, with a brilliant light above them all. Then the gates slowly closed again and he returned to life.

In view of these two experiences one wonders whether the peacock's tail was not a name given to the first vision of the next sphere. But we shall want many cases before the hypothesis will stand, and I only give it for what it is worth.

While in Boston I spent an hour or so in the magnificent temple of the Christian Scientists. I confess that I have little sympathy with these people. Mrs. Eddy did two things which she should not have done. The first was that she died, which seems in flat contradiction to her theories. The second was that she left a quarter of a million pounds behind her, and when a religious teacher does that I look very askance at the teaching.

The inside of the gorgeous temple is covered over with alternate texts from Jesus the pauper and from Mary the millionaire, the former beautiful, the latter verbose and turgid. What did she bring into the world that is new? Faith healing and healing by what

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we now call suggestion are as old as history. When suggestion is allied with religion it is at its best, as Lourdes and many other shrines, non-Christian or Christian, will show.

Does it require a millionaire priestess and a five-million-dollar temple to teach us that? This suggestion has often acted well—sometimes it acts ill. I had a young friend with cancer of the liver who was inoculated with this idea, and who went about declaring his evil did not exist till he fell dead in his tracks. A surgeon might have saved him. We spiritualists have our healing mediums, and suggestion helps them, no doubt, but we claim no monopoly and have no great temples. In only one thing can I actually and certainly test the truth of this cult, and that is in their view of Spiritualism, and that I know to be utterly false. But how strange it is that this questionable movement with its appeal to physical well-being should find wealth and honour and attention while we are persecuted and poor! But the story is not yet finished, and each will find its true place.

I went, while at Boston, to visit Bunker Hill. I had always imagined it as an eminence or ridge some miles out of the town, yet I was surprised to find that it was close at hand, and even in those days must have been part of the suburbs. It can hardly be called a hill at all, but is a mere mound which was the centre of a line of trenches.

It was carried by the British soldiers, but at a loss which put fresh heart into the Americans, who, like the Boers, were strong in their accurate rifle-fire. All these skirmishes of the Revolutionary War and of the

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War of 1812 are hardly known to British youth, who are equally ignorant of Princeton where we lost, and of Long Island where we won. But they bulk large over here, and this is natural since so great a result grew out of them. They are among the few battles of the world which left a huge permanent monument behind them.

It is always, however, with sadness that a British traveller must view the places which marked the divisions between the two branches of one family and so prevented that family from exerting a single salutary influence upon the human race. However, here also the story is not yet finished, and God's wisdom will surely in some way be justified.

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CHAPTER VI

Washington—The Capitol at Night—Ex-President Wilson—Abraham Lincoln, Spiritualist—Statues—Senator Lodge—Lady Astor—Dr. Cushman—Letter from the Beyond—Zancigs—A Clairvoyante—Successful Lectures—Mr. Castle's Experiences.

On Thursday, April 27th, having, as I hoped, given Boston something to think over, I started on a long through journey to Washington, which was brightened in the middle by picking up my whole family at New York and carrying them on with me. I had determined so far as possible to leave them in some central position while I did the work, but it seemed wrong that their young minds should not receive the tremendous impression which the capital would give. While we were still wavering, an invitation came from Mr. Mark Sullivan, the well-known journalist, that they should stay with his children in his home while we did our business, saw the Press, etc., at a hotel.

This generous offer removed every difficulty, and so we were able to take up our travels again in joyous—though rather noisy—companionship.

It was late when we got to Washington, but in spite of this Mr. and Mrs. Mark Sullivan, with true American hospitality, were waiting at the station and carried off Miss Stable and the children while we drove to the Belmont Hotel, where the Press mercifully

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spared us for that night. They made up, however, next morning.

I observed that among the pressmen who interviewed me was one of the young Vanderbilts, who had, I presume, been thrown into the water to learn to swim for himself, without the bladder of wealth. The Press seemed to me less aggressive but also less earnest in Washington than elsewhere, but there is a world Press there, men who deal only with great interests, like Mr. Mark Sullivan, with no connexion with the local papers.

After the Press ordeal was over, we had a long drive over this beautiful city, which has improved enormously since my last visit. It contains some vistas which can hardly be matched in the world, and the sight of the lovely dome of the Capitol lit up at night by the beam of a search-light is like one of Vale Owen's magnificent pictures of the other world or some glorious vision by Martin.

One feels as one looks at that centre of power that surely selfishness, national or personal, will not for ever prevail, and that some great thing for the whole human race will come out of that wonderful silver dome outlined against the starry sky. The salvation of the world depends upon America rising to the height of those responsibilities which overwhelming power must bring with it.

Which reminds me that during the day we saw a group of women delegates assembling in front of ex-President Wilson's house, from which an infirm and broken man emerged to address them with a few tired and halting words. Was ever a man in the whole

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course of history placed in such a position? I confess that in my historical reading I can remember no such case.

All Europe at the supreme moment of Fate accepted him with reverence as the accredited plenipotentiary of a great nation, and then, on account of some swirl of domestic politics utterly unintelligible to outsiders, they found all his promises and engagements swept out of sight, and were left alone to carry out the engagements which had only been entered into on the strength of those same promises.

Well, the story is not ended yet, but however it may end the episode stands by itself, and one can but pity a man placed in so dreadful a position. He was hailed in Europe like a God of Justice descended from the skies. I wonder what his reception, poor man, would be to-day!

Washington has been greatly embellished by the new white marble monument to Abraham Lincoln, a building so chaste and perfect that it would not have jarred if placed upon the Acropolis.

When one looks from its perfect outline to the large obelisk which represents the nation's homage to their great founder, one must admit that the Americans know how to honour their dead leaders, even if they do occasionally place them in rather difficult positions while they are alive.

I wonder, by the way, how many Americans realise that Lincoln was a convinced Spiritualist, and that he was sustained at the most arduous crisis by his help from the Beyond.

The story is clear and remarkable. Miss Nettie

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Colborn, a young trance-medium, went to Washington in the crisis of the North-South War. Her object was to get a furlough for her brother, who was a soldier and ill. Mrs. Lincoln had heard of the powers of Miss Colborn, and the President was asked to confirm them. Miss Colborn was asked to the White House. Upon the entrance of the President she was at once entranced and spoke for an hour in a most convincing and commanding way. Spectators seemed to have recognised terms of speech which recalled Daniel Webster. "Those present declared that they lost sight of the timid girl in the majesty of the utterance and seemed to realise that some strange masculine spirit-force was giving speech to almost divine commands." The spirit-orders were to instantly issue the proclamation on slavery and so give moral elevation to the war. Lincoln was much impressed and said, "My child, you possess a very singular gift, and that it is of God I have no doubt. I thank you for coming here to-night. It is more important than perhaps any one here present can understand." A later communication urged him to go in person to visit the Federal camps where the soldiers were much discouraged. The effect of these two measures coming at a time of such danger to the Republic was so great that it is not too much to say that the words of a medium went far to preserve the State—that very state which now makes mediumship a penal offence, and allows such psychic sensitives as Miss Colborn to be harried by the police.

It seems absurd to be always speaking in superlatives, and yet it is difficult to avoid it when one

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mentions some of the sights of Washington. The Capitol is superlative, so is the Monument, so is the Lincoln Memorial, and finally, what could be more superlative than the inside of the Congressional Library? It really is the most perfect interior of a building I have ever seen.

An architect might have something to say about a mixture of styles, but I can only say that our eyes and senses were absolutely satisfied with its grace and beauty. The inside of the Capitol and the Senate House, which we visited, were commonplace in comparison. The Senate was in session and we looked down on a scattered assembly who were carrying on a languid debate. If brain size is really an index of mental power, I should say the American Senate was the most intellectual of all assemblies, for I am convinced that the average size of hat would be the largest that I have ever known in any body of men. And yet when I think of Joseph Chamberlain and many others I realise that quality of brain may be more important than quantity.

The Americans are certainly adorning Washington as lovingly as a man might his beloved. Besides the wonderful Lincoln Memorial they have just put a fine bronze statue of Grant at the side of the Capitol, which was only uncovered on the day before our arrival. The statue itself, equestrian, is conventional. The battle groups on either side of it are, in my opinion, among the finest bronzes of action in the world.

There is one of a gun under fire, the horses down, a dead gunner seated on the limber and his companion staring wide-eyed before him, which could not be

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beaten for spirit and realism. We have no such work of art in the streets of London.

The one thing we had to hope from the German air-raids was that some of our statues might vanish into powder.

I had an excellent audience on Friday night and nothing could have gone better than my lecture. On Saturday I met many people of interest and found a very general desire for fuller information upon psychic subjects. All this chatter about exposures, the statements of our case from the point of view of counsels of the prosecution, have confused men's minds. It is as if they had to judge Christianity after they had been dosed with Bradlaugh and Ingersoll.

However, I find that people are beginning to get clearer on the subject, and to understand that the attack of smaller men founded upon negatives has little weight against the opinion of some of the picked brains of the world founded upon actual personal experiences.

During our honeymoon in 1907 we met in the Levant a young American graduate named Rogers, who was also on his honeymoon. We found that he had now become a rising man in politics, representing Lowell in New England in Congress. Under his auspices and those of Mark Sullivan we met some of the celebrities of the capital.

Among these were Mr. Hoover, the saviour of the destitute, Mr. Denby, Secretary of the Navy, Lord Astor, and Senator Lodge. Senator Lodge is a somewhat grim-looking greybeard of the New England type, erect and wiry in spite of his age. I looked upon

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him with some aversion, as being mainly responsible for the downfall of Wilson and of that League of Nations which promised some ease to a suffering world.

However, in conversation I found him very affable and interesting. We found a common bond in our mutual admiration for Parkman, whom he had the privilege of knowing, and whose personality as well as his writings have always attracted me greatly.

His making a frame of wood so that he could guide his hand to write books after he was blind has always seemed a fine example of ingenuity and fortitude.

We saw a little and heard a great deal of Lady Astor, or "Nancy," as the Americans affectionately call her. She has certainly done splendid international work, and has a genius for saying the right thing at the right moment.

So many of our travellers in the past have been wanting in sympathy to the Americans that it is good to find some one who can clearly see both sides of the question. Among her *obiter dicta* I saw one in which she condemned Spiritualism root and branch, but I can forgive her that if she will only tighten our bonds with our brothers in blood.

Many of them feel strongly upon the Anglo-American question, and the divisions of the past. I said to one statesman, "The one thing which hurt me in the war was when Secretary Daniels of your Navy gave instructions to his Admiral to regard England as a possible enemy as much as Germany at the very time when we were giving America all our naval confidence and secrets."

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His answer was, "Well, if it hurt you, you can imagine how much it hurt some of us."

To revert to my opening lecture in the capital, Dr. Cushman was in the chair. Dr. Cushman has fully appreciated the truth ever since he had the striking evidence in connexion with his daughter's picture got through Mrs. Deane, as already described.

There was some sensation when at the close of my lecture he stepped to the front, and, holding every one's attention by his commanding presence and sonorous voice, told the audience most solemnly that he had learned by personal experience that all that I was saying was true, and that it was the message above all others which the poor, tired, puzzled world was in need of. His remarks made a very great effect.

Our Sunday in Washington was a psychic day, and was crowded with interesting experiences. Dr. Cushman invited us to lunch, where we met several of his brothers and sisters, each as whole-hearted as himself. They are all nephews and nieces of the famous Charlotte Cushman who once was to America what Ellen Terry has been to us.

Cushman's aunt had lived in the same house as D. D. Home in his New England days, and the old lady had told Cushman of the wonderful phenomena which young Home used to produce in their own household.

Yet Cushman had the experience of hearing one of the high officials of the London Psychic Research Society talk of Home as having been a famous swindler. Some minds seem impervious to truth.

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After lunch Dr. Cushman read us two long letters received from his wife and daughter upon the other side through the automatic writing of one of his family. We had never heard anything more touching and beautiful.

Their description of the place in which they found themselves was enthralling. It seems certainly to be a most glorious existence. The general scheme was exactly what I have preached, and what a hundred records have confirmed.

Every sort of earth-amusement seems to keep pace with a high spiritual and intellectual life. In lifetime Dr. Cushman had said to his wife:

"If I go first, you will find me craning over for you."

He had never mentioned this to a soul, but in the script came a sentence: "You see it is I who am doing the craning over."

They spoke of themselves as being in the fourth plane, and said that those who were mentally prepared by earth-knowledge of psychic matters could attain that happy level. They also wrote very seriously about the loneliness and misery which are experienced by those who find it very hard to adapt their minds to a scheme so different from any for which they have been prepared.

The daughter had seen the Christ once, which corresponds with Raymond's experience and also with that of my Kingsley. The latter, in describing the event through the hand of my wife, wrote words which were as vibrant with emotion and awe and wonder as are those of Raymond or Agnes Cushman

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when they also tell of that great episode—that glimpse of something never to be forgotten.

The Zancigs came up to our room in the hotel and gave an exhibition during the day. They may use codes occasionally when their powers are low—of that I cannot say—but what they showed us was apparently thought-transference.

No word passed at all, but Mrs. Zancig, standing with her face turned sideways at the far end of the room, was able to repeat names and to duplicate drawings which we made and showed to her husband.

She is an American from Brooklyn, and told me that she was developing some power as a clairvoyante. She told me also that when her husband conveyed a name it often appeared to her as printed in the air—which is the usual way with our mediums.

Possibly it is a real ectoplasmic formation like the figures of Eva. Telepathy has been imagined by some Spiritualists to be a real carrying of messages by some Familiar. This is certainly not so.

On one occasion a group of students at Cambridge, all concentrating together, succeeded in imprinting so many 7's in the poor woman's brain that the husband was utterly unable to get any number through. That experiment settled the Familiar forever. The fact remains, however, that we have not the least idea of what we mean by the word telepathy, which, like most portentous words, is a camouflage of ignorance.

It may possibly prove to be the perception of ectoplasmic messages or figures by the etheric senses.

We went up in the morning to see the enigmatical bronze figure by St. Gaudens, erected as a memorial

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of one of the Adams family. It is girt round by trees, with a marble bench that you may sit and meditate at your ease.

It is certainly one of the great works of art of the world, tremendous in its strong simplicity—a draped figure seated with closed eyes and a set face. As in the case of the Sphinx, every one can read his own interpretation into it.

Late in the afternoon we had a sitting at her own house with Mrs. Rose Miller, a local clairvoyante. She is of the kindly, motherly, full-bosomed type which is common among her class. Even such are Mrs. Roberts, Mrs. Soule, Mrs. Harris, and many others of my acquaintance.

Mrs. Miller was soon in trance and we had an hour's talk with what professed to be her little Indian guide. There was nothing of great evidential value, from a coldly psychic-research point of view, but there was a very sure feeling of honesty and kindly power left in our minds.

She never fished and we gave nothing away, but a great deal of advice about the children and ourselves reached us, full of sense and truth, and purporting to be from those who took a loving interest in us. As an example, we were told that little Billy should not have cold sea-bathing.

We know by experience that she is the only one of the children who cannot tolerate it. She made no actual mistake of any consequence in discussing our affairs.

On the whole, I should judge her a true and good medium, but I should imagine that any powers she

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has need sympathy on the part of the sitter to draw them up.

The little gushing Indian would soon wither up before a sternly critical pair of eyes—but the critic would be the loser.

In the evening my picture lecture before a silent but absorbed audience. I was told that a more select one has seldom gathered in Washington. One Senator came up to congratulate me at the end, but I did not catch his name.

I was very exhausted with the heat and with the long day of varied experiences. If I had not my wife upholding me on one side and Captain Widdecombe on the other, I should make a poor show.

Before leaving my memories of this full day I must mention a remarkable psychic picture which I saw, done by the artist while in trance.

A coarse, worldly-looking man was standing squeezing the throat of a poor misshapen wisp of a thing, which had blood pouring from its gasping mouth. It was horrible and yet finely symbolic, for it was the worldly man killing his own stunted soul.

Wertz never did anything more terrific.

We spent our last morning in Washington visiting the National Spiritualists' Association, a nice central building, which was left by the pious bequest of a Mr. Myer. British Spiritualists, please copy. The premises are modest but contain some remarkable pictures of the three Fox sisters, Dr. Peebles, and other celebrities.

Mr. Cates, a pioneer of fifty years' standing, looks after the place. His wife, Mrs. Cates, is a powerful

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medium and at once gave us a touch of her control's quality, which was very remarkable. There was nothing very evidential, and yet it was correct so far as it went, and all very dignified and impressive.

I had an interesting talk with Mr. Castle, who is a high official in the Department of State, connected, as I understand, with foreign affairs. In early days he had some remarkable psychic experiences which made him sympathetic to my mission.

On one occasion he had a long ride alone in Honolulu with Miss Rose Field, the American authoress. On her return from the ride the lady was taken ill, possibly from exposure to the sun, and after two days she died. Some time afterwards an American Spiritualist wrote a life of Miss Field which purported to be a spirit-autobiography, and in it was a full account of this ride which could not have been known in any normal way.

Even more interesting is an account which Mr. Castle wrote out for me about another Honolulu experience, where in a certain house the apparent flame of a candle used to issue from one of the rooms at intervals and pass down the corridor to the front door. "At first people living in the house were frightened, but they found nothing happened and therefore in the end paid no attention to it. I have myself seen this candle-flame, and have held my hand in front of it, the flame passing directly through my hand. There were no electrical phenomena in those islands." No doubt a clairvoyant would have seen the figure which bore the light.

I have myself in my collection of psychic photo-

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graphs a picture of a ghost carrying lights in exactly the same way. But what has the sceptic materialist to say to such an incident? and how absurd it is to continually avert our faces and to deny or ignore what is beyond all doubt, and can be explained only by one system of thought!

One cannot leave Washington without some last thought of the international political situation, which has surely never been so obscure since the world was made. Is this Gordian knot of debt to be carefully unravelled or is there some way by which it can be cut?

We British feel that the money is honestly owing and must be honestly paid, and yet we feel that it would be a monstrous injustice if we were to pay the thousand million that we owe and have to write off as a bad debt the three and a half thousand million which we are owed. We should feel it all the more as the money advanced was largely for our Continental allies, and we are in the position of a man who has gone surety for a friend and been called upon to pay up—a perfectly just and legal position from the point of view of the lender, and yet one which naturally leaves a rankling dissatisfaction behind it.

Britain is too proud to accept humiliating favours, and any remission of debt must be part of a great world-scheme where there is a general readjustment. But what is America to get in such a readjustment, and how can we help being humiliated if we accept favours from her with no return?

There is one factor which has, I think, not been sufficiently discussed. How about the cession by

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France and Great Britain of all of their West Indian possessions as one asset which they hold and which America might desire? It is a delicate question, and yet I think that after the first natural recoil there is much to commend it.

These islands are of no particular use in our huge Empire, and they are of very great use to America, for they are the natural fortresses of the Caribbean Sea, and the advanced sentinels of that great Canal which was built by American energy and capital.

Their loss would be sentimental—and that is, I agree, a very great loss—but the crisis is a vital one, and those of us who believe in the future federation of all English-speaking states on terms of equality can console ourselves by the thought that these beautiful islands are not lost to us for ever.

There is no doubt that the Americans eagerly desire them, as they showed when they gave Denmark five million pounds for the single tiny Island of St. Thomas. The crucial point is how far would the islands themselves sanction the arrangement, for we could not possibly do it against strong opposition on their part.

We have to remember that for many years their industry has declined because their natural market, the United States, is closed to them. That may well influence their decision. In the case of St. Thomas the local vote was in favour of transfer.

Apart from the transaction as part of a debt payment which we can meet in no other way, there are, I think, broad reasons of world-policy which might recommend such a course to the far-seeing statesman.

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The future of the world depends upon the Anglo-Celtic nations getting together, and this is of such importance that everything may well be subordinated to it.

These islands have always been a thorn in the side of America. At the present instant they see their laws flouted by the ease with which liquor can be run into their territory from these British bases.

It is a weapon in the hands of our enemies and a difficulty for our friends. What does the Empire get in exchange? The complete goodwill and friendship of America is worth such a sacrifice ten times over. And yet I agree that two conditions are vital for such a cession.

One is the consent of the ceded.

The other is the concurrence of the French, for we could not put ourselves in the position that they had naval bases in Western waters and we had none.

But their debt also is at stake, and they may well join with us in the sacrifice.

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CHAPTER VII

Philadelphia—The Independence of Britain—Record in Spiritualism—Alleged MS. of Roger Bacon—Mr. Pierpont Morgan—The Buchanan Codex—The Press—Desire and Fulfilment—Laryngitis—A Test of Faith—Arthur Stilwell—Yale.

From Washington our route ran through Philadelphia, where I gave two lectures with all the success I could wish, though the second lecture, a matinée, unfortunately coincided with a great public function at which Mr. Taft was to reconsecrate the old Town Hall, centre of American liberty. We went down to explore the old building, which, with its adjacent courthouse and other wings, is of considerable size. It is of red brick of the style of the early Georges, and reminds one of some of the buildings in the legal Inns of London. There are the old revolutionary flags, the Liberty Bell now badly cracked (*absit omen!*), and many other relics of the stirring times. The chief one, however, is the room itself, which sheltered the first Congress and which heard the first reading of the United States charter of independence.

I wonder how many Americans in their natural exuberance at victory won have reflected what would certainly have occurred had the leaders of their people held on in patience, or with passive resistance, for another decade or so. The liberal party in England would, the moment they got into power, have redressed

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their grievances and henceforth the Empire would have been contented and whole.

There would have been no war of 1776, no war of 1812, no war of 1861, for the freedom of the slaves could have been effected by fair purchase as in the rest of Britain's possessions. Then, as the most populous must always govern in any democratic system, America would quite naturally and peacefully have become the centre and chief guide to all the scattered English-speaking nations, with the four home countries as part of the huge, world-wide confederation which might have stopped all war and ushered in the millennium.

It is strange to think that, as events have turned out, it was the independence of England rather than that of the United States which was really determined in the old town hall.

Philadelphia is associated in several ways with this greatest of all questions, the psychic revelation. It will be accounted to her honour that the early seeds grew rapidly there in the congenial Quaker soil, and that the first Spiritual Church, now ably presided over by Mr. Russell, was established there seventy years ago. Mr. Russell seemed to me to be a man who by his personality and breadth of view might do much to impress the intellectual researcher and to reconcile the old half-forgotten truths of Christianity with the information which comes to us first-hand from the other world.

It is to Philadelphia's honour also that a brave and clear-headed man, Dr. Hare, Professor of Chemistry at the University of Pennsylvania, was the first scien-

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tific man of repute to seriously examine the phenomena and to assert not only their validity but the religious implications which lie behind it. It is a mere chance that the University of Pennsylvania was not the pioneer body of the world in establishing a chair of Psychic Research. Henry Seybert left behind him a legacy to the university which he clearly hoped would be used directly or indirectly to help this movement in which he had taken a great interest in his lifetime. The university chose a body to examine the subject, which was called the Seybert Commission. It published a full report from which it is clear that the members, with one exception, knew nothing of the subject, and which is often disfigured by a levity which always accompanies ignorance. It must be admitted, however, that the commission did their best within their limitations, but psychic conditions are delicate things, and it is to be feared that cold and formal critics will never get that which comes readily to the earnest or to the sorrow-laden. Sometimes it would appear that they were actually faced with real fraud. However that may be, the result was a setback for Spiritualism, and the university lost its chance of being a Pioneer of Progress.

I understand that a somewhat similar situation has arisen in the Leland Stanford, Jr., University in California. A large sum which was left for the encouragement of psychic studies has been used mainly up to now, I am told, in an attempt to show that telepathy does not exist—an easy matter if one assembles all the negative evidence and avoids what is positive. But what are the explainers-away to do if they are robbed

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of telepathy, which has up to now, together with the sub-conscious, been the umbrella under which they sheltered themselves from all evidence of unseen life!

I had a visit at Philadelphia from Professor Newbold of that city, whose subject is Early Christian Philosophy, but who was good enough to show me photographs of the remarkable Voynich MS.

It is really a most extraordinary thing if it prove to be genuine, and Professor Newbold assures me that there can be no doubt upon this point. The manuscript was found in the East of Europe—I am not clear where.

It is partly in legible Latin and partly in a very obscure cypher which Newbold thinks that he has solved. It is signed by Roger Bacon, so that the date would be approximately thirteenth century. The manuscript has to do with the physiology of reproduction and the connexion between soul and body at the time of birth. There are numerous and complex illustrations, and it is impossible to doubt, presuming that the work is by Bacon, that he had a microscope and a good one. Cells and even nuclei are shown, and the whole relation of ovum and Fallopian tubes is correctly set forth.

If his occult knowledge is as accurate as his anatomy the old Friar knew much, but the text is disfigured by a good deal of licence so far as Professor Newbold has been able to translate it. The book should make a sensation when it appears, though I can understand that the critics will have a strong case.

Talking of curious manuscripts, I spent a morning in Mr. Morgan's famous library in New York, and

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had an interview with the famous financier, a tall, ruddy, companionable man, less melancholy than most millionaires whom I have met. He was just off to meet the British delegates and try to settle up the affairs of poor distracted Europe.

Miss Green, his learned and pleasant librarian, showed us round. I was particularly anxious to see the old manuscript upon which Mr. Buchanan had founded his claim that he had discovered a version of the Scriptures older than any known, and possibly dating from the first century.

His published story was that while he was examining a twelfth-century Gospel he perceived writing underneath the text, and found upon closer examination that the parchment had been used before and that he had come upon this remarkable old version of the Scriptures.

If the parchment which I saw was the same as that of Mr. Buchanan, and the librarian assured me that it was so, I must confess that my eyes or my imagination are duller than his, for I could make out nothing save an occasional correction by the scribe superimposed upon his own erased writing.

It would indeed be a glorious thing if we could really come upon a set of gospels of the first or even of the second century, for they would give us a pure text and avoid those pernicious additions and falsifications which were brought about before Jerome collected the Vulgate into one volume. We have had to drink ever since from a tainted stream, and we need to get to some spot nearer the springs, and before the poison was introduced.

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OUR AMERICAN ADVENTURE

I have just been reading Mrs. Asquith's remarks upon the American papers, and especially upon the greater intelligence shown in the reporting than in the editing. The same thing has struck me many times. The editors seem to place the intelligence of the public very low, and to imagine that they cannot be attracted save by vulgar, screaming headlines. It has been quite a pleasure very often to talk to the reporters, and next day I have perhaps seen the result of the talk in a dignified rational interview, disfigured by some such caption as "Do Spooks Marry?" or "High Jinks in the Beyond," utterly out of keeping with the report, and evidently introduced by the man in the office, who has not been in contact with me at all.

The American papers have a strange way also of endeavouring to compress the whole meaning of some item into a few words of headline, which, as often as not, are slang.

Thus you will read "Patrolman Smith Shoots Up Conman Hopkins and Recovers Wad," or "Mud Hens Toss Off a Double Header" (this is baseball), or "Senator Smith Hands the Dope to the Committee."

All papers are not sensational, however, nor can we afford to preach much in the matter. There are some American journals, such as the Boston *Transcript*, which could match the *Scotsman* for demure sobriety, and would announce the Day of Judgment in small type.

I wonder if it has been noticed how often wish is really prophecy—the most unlikely wish coming true in the course of the years. I am reminded of a talk I had with my younger brother in Philadelphia

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nearly thirty years ago. He was then a subaltern of gunners, fresh from Woolwich, and I had asked him to be my travelling companion. One day we talked very earnestly of the senseless dissension which at that time was very apparent between the two countries.

I remember that I said with some earnestness, "Well, Innes, I only hope that in your military career you will some day find yourself leading British soldiers shoulder to shoulder with American soldiers in a just cause—and may I be there to see!"

Could any wish have been more grotesquely impossible, and yet I must have spoken with some strange conviction, since the words remain so clear to me after all the years. But see how it turned out.

Upon September 29th, 1918, standing on the top tread of an up-ended tank, I saw the 27th and 30th Divisions of the American Army helping the Australians to break the Hindenburg Line, while my brother was in high command in the third British Army Corps, which was advancing on the left.

How can one explain such a thing as that? Surely it is far beyond coincidence. But if not, then are our paths in life so accurately mapped that, even twenty-four years before, the outcome can be seen?

At one matinée lecture at Philadelphia I had an amusing experience—at least it amused the audience. I spoke with a huge drop-curtain of canvas behind me. When I had made my bow I walked off, but found that there was no exit on the right side. I turned and walked across the proscenium, but again, to my surprise, was faced with rigid canvas. I then concluded I was mistaken in my first venture, so I

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again crossed but found it quite impassable. I then wandered down the face of the curtain amid sympathetic laughter from those who observed my dilemma, until at last I saw a slit and the agitated hand of Widdecombe.

This queer bolt-hole about a third of the way across formed entrance and exit, though I had not observed it in coming on. The adventure was not so funny as one which occurred in my first lecture-tour, when I was bustled on to the stage at Daly's Theatre with several books under my arm.

It was a stage door with a small sill of wood over which I tripped, so that from the point of view of the audience I came cantering down the sloping stage, clutching at my dropping books. There was a general desire for an encore.

When I returned from Philadelphia I had planned a few days of rest, but I found that the demand had been so great that my manager had interpolated two repetitions of the photographic lecture, which meant that these proofs were set before the eyes of seven thousand more people.

I had come to the conclusion that it was best to occupy half the lecture in giving a synopsis of the philosophy of the subject, which is quite enough to convince and satisfy a reasonable mind without any phenomena at all, and then to show the photographs of actual happenings, explaining that they are quite secondary and that this side of the question has had far too much attention paid it, because it appeals to our lower dramatic instincts rather than to our reason.

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I continued now to follow this course during the remainder of my tour.

An interesting example of spirit-power occurred during these last New York lectures. I caught laryngitis in acute form, there being an epidemic of it at the time. The result of it was that I lost my voice entirely—so much so that I could not make my wife understand me across the bedroom. I was in no way perturbed, though I had to address a great meeting that afternoon, and though I consulted Dr. Colby, the able specialist, it was rather to satisfy my manager than myself.

When the hour came I walked to the front of the platform, and with an effort I croaked out, loud enough for all to hear me, "I have quite lost my voice, so as a sign of my confidence in spiritual power I propose to-day to give a quarter of an hour's extra lecture." It seemed a strange *non sequitur,* but I actually spoke for one and three-quarter hours, getting clearer and better all the time, though I relapsed at once when the lecture was over.

These forces will never fail us so long as we are engaged upon their work. In old days, when I lectured on the War, I used to get severe heart palpitations. Never once has this happened to me since I took up my spiritual mission, but my strength has always proved greater with every new demand.

On the occasion of my last lecture in New York I introduced Mr. Arthur Stilwell to the audience, saying, "I am only in a position to talk of these wonderful matters, but here is a man who experiences them in his own person." He came up on to the platform

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at my request and acquitted himself very well in a quarter of an hour's talk. He is one of those to whom I look to carry on the work when I am gone. His history is certainly a marvellous one. He has a daimon, as Socrates had, who advises him and whose advice must be followed lest worse befall. It comes, I understand, as a vision in the night. Stilwell as a young man was well placed in an insurance business. The Daimon told him to resign and go west and build railroads. He was not an engineer, yet he obeyed. He has now laid more miles of rail than any living man.

When he was laying the South Kansas line the terminus was to be Galveston. The Daimon told him to halt the line short of the terminus and build a canal thence to the sea. It was done.

Four days later came a tidal wave and convulsion which for the time wiped Galveston off the map, and the canal was a harbour of refuge. So again and again, beyond all doubt or question, this wonderful guide has led him through life.

The last great effort of the guide was to dictate a plan by which the world could be relieved of the pressure of war debt. Stilwell published the revelation under the name of *The Great Plan*. I was, I think, one of the few in England who took it seriously, and I wrote an account of it to the *Evening Standard*. It was met by all sorts of minor objections, people failing to understand that an absolutely abnormal situation must be met in an abnormal way. If there has been immense temporary pressure upon an estate, it is not attempted to meet that pressure entirely out of the

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shattered revenues, but the credit of the estate is pledged for the time when in the future it shall have recovered. If the world be taken as the estate, that is the simple but effective idea in Stilwell's plan.

The idea, expressed very shortly, is that every nation shall pay a reasonable sum every year to a central fund, and shall pledge itself to continue to do so for seventy years. Notes shall be issued and passed into circulation, so that they can be used as currency, which shall be guaranteed by the fund, not as it now is but as it will be at the end of that period. So we make the resources of the future available for the payment of war debts and other uses of the present.

This of course is the merest sketch, but it has the germ of the idea. It would be international money with an international guarantee.

Mr. Stilwell spoke well, and I only hope some larger field may be opened up for him. Houdini was present at this, or it may have been another New York lecture, and escorted my wife out down a passage which they imagined would be a short cut, but which actually ended in a padlocked door. Houdini put out his big right hand, and by some cantrip gathered up the padlock as one picks a plum from a tree. The way was cleared to the street.

I had now done the great Eastern cities and the time had come to continue my work by lecturing in some of the larger inland centres. Before doing so I ran up to New Haven, where I gave a lecture to an audience consisting largely of Yale students, who received the subject in a very sympathetic fashion.

Yale is not quite so old as Harvard, and indeed

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represents a secession from Harvard on the part of those who thought the Boston University was too liberal in its ideas. The outside of the colleges, however, with the old trees in front of them, and the great green common, gives the European visitor an impression of mellow growth which he seldom receives in this bustling community. After this short sally I prepared for the longer trip which was really to be a final one, ending up in Chicago. I felt impelled to take my whole family with me, as the Spiritualists were to give us a formal welcome in Chicago, and we felt that it would be a remembrance which the children would always carry with them.

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CHAPTER VIII

A. J. Davis—A Domestic Tragedy—Buffalo Audience—The Davenport Brothers—The Voice Mediumship of Mrs. French.

The road from New York to the interior lies for several hours along the left bank of the Hudson River, with the wonderful basalt-like cliffs called the Palisades upon the further side. I do not think that finer river-scenery can be found anywhere in the world.

Poughkeepsie is passed, with its memories of Andrew Jackson Davis, and the spur of the Catskills where he claimed to have seen the form of Swedenborg. That particular chapter of his experiences was, I must confess, very incredible to me, though I have no doubt of the truth and strength of his clairvoyant revelations, in the course of which he, the unread lad, gave the true number of the planets before the astronomers had discovered Uranus.

It is strange that the *Harmonic Philosophy,* which has gone through forty editions in America, is little known in England. A less weighty but more readable book is *The Magic Staff,* which gives the account of Davis' wonderful youth and development from a mesmeric medical diagnostician to a world-instructing seer.

The line leaves the Hudson near Albany, the little town which is the legal master of New York. Then you get for many hours the beautiful Mohawk Valley, inhabited now by the prosperous farmer and

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mechanic, but only a couple of centuries ago by a tribe of Indians who even in far London gave the very name to reckless lawlessness.

Schenectady, Utica, Syracuse—I had lectured in all of them nearly thirty years before. It did not seem to me that they had improved in the interval, and perhaps the observation would have been mutual. Then we passed classic Rochester, most honoured of all towns, and blissfully unconscious of it.

It is much more proud of being the seat of the kodak industry than of the fact that on its outskirts there came the first systematic material touch between the plane of mortal and of spirit. It occurred to my mind as we passed what a fine thing it would be if I could now at once start a movement here for building a fine commemorative obelisk upon the spot, as a visible sign of our gratitude. If every one who has had comfort from the revelation were to subscribe some small coin we could put up one of the greatest monuments in the world.

We all assembled outside the observation car and tried to imagine which was Hydesville, but we got no further than noting down several old frame houses which were exactly like that which I show on my plate.

The original house was removed by pious hands and reconstructed, as I understand, at Lily Dale. It is not generally know that when it was pulled down or it may have been before, the bones of the murdered pedlar and his tin box were discovered buried in the cellar, as was stated in the original rappings. The rappings were in 1848, the discovery in 1903.

What have our opponents to say to that?

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And how blind are the papers with their pages of baseball and football and hardly a line as to a fact so wonderful.

As a rule it is I who have to be in the limelight, but it was my wife who now fairly took the middle of the stage. The page of the *Buffalo Courier* lies before me with a caption which could be read across the road, and was read by me right across the dining-room of the Iroquois Hotel.

LADY CONAN DOYLE LOST SIX HOURS

WIFE OF AUTHOR RESTS QUIETLY AT NIAGARA FALLS, ONT., HOTEL

FRANTIC INQUIRY ON U. S. SIDE

There was a great deal more to it, but that was the first explosion. The facts were that I was desirous that the whole party should see the great sight of America, and so we all travelled together until we reached Buffalo, where I had to lecture next evening. The rest of the party continued the fifty-minute journey which should land them at Niagara, where rooms had been reserved for them at the Prospect House on the American shore. They were due there about seven. At nine Captain Widdecombe 'phoned them up to see that they were all right, and came to me, somewhat aghast, to say that they had never arrived.

It seemed to me as if a small mystery tale which I once wrote, where a certain train started from one junction and never arrived at the next one, never being heard of again, had actually come back upon me.

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For three hours, until nearly midnight, we were 'phoning and inquiring with no result. We traced down the attendant of the railway car, who swore they had all, six of them, landed safely at their destination. But they had never reached the Prospect House.

Things came to such a pass that we were on the point of ordering a swift automobile to take us both to Niagara after midnight, when at last a still small voice at the end of thirty miles of wire put us at our ease. A series of incidents, which are superfluous, had caused them to seek quarters in the Lafayette Hotel upon the further shore.

It was no laughing matter at the moment, but it gave us several hearty laughs afterwards, especially when we heard of a negro porter running up and down the platform shouting "Lady Doyle done gone lost herself."

I do not remember in all my meetings having a better audience than in Buffalo, so alert and sympathetic. It should be so since it was the nearest point to Hydesville at which I spoke.

"Large Audience Profoundly Impressed" was the heading of the report in one paper.

"Sir Arthur Deeply Moves Audience" was the other.

As each gave us a three-column report, and as the papers reach a hundred for every one who can hear my voice, there is no doubt that this message of truth and of happiness which alters life and does away with death is finding its way to the people. It is curious how in this country the old petty disputes as to whether this medium is genuine or this other is a fake have died out.

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They take the broader view, and admit the position that so long as any phenomena are genuine (and no one but an ignorant fool could deny that), then the general case may be lifted at once to a broader, higher level.

For some reason unknown this corner of the world was a scene of great psychic activity in the middle of the last century. If the experiences of the Foxes had not established spiritualism in Rochester in 1848, those of the Davenports would have done so in Buffalo, only ninety miles away, in 1851. Indeed, phenomena had appeared in the Davenport household as early as 1846, taking the usual forms of raps and knockings.

In this case the centre of activity was two boys, Ira and William Davenport, whose ages corresponded very closely to those of the Fox girls. Any theory that the phenomena were caused by mischievous children becomes untenable when measured by the actual facts as given in detail in Dr. Nichol's Biography of the Davenports. The father was an official in the Buffalo police force, a solid, tenacious man, who refused under great pressure to retract his accounts of what he had seen and experienced.

Levitation was a common phenomenon in the household and hundreds of neighbours were ready to testify to having seen the boys in the air, and even to the fact that Ira was raised with such force that his head broke the plaster of the ceiling.

It was found that no ropes could confine the two lads, and eventually this remarkable fact was made the subject of a stage performance and was exhibited by the brothers all around the world, reaching England

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in 1864, where they caused a great sensation, and the truth of the phenomena was tested and supported by many men of eminence, working in their own drawing-rooms and under their own conditions.

Among these inquirers were Lord Bury, Charles Reade, Admiral Inglefield, Chambers the publisher, Carter Hall, William Howitt, and Dion Boucicault, who all agreed after the closest inspection that there was no evidence of trickery or collusion.

The instant solution of all bindings was accompanied with signs of outside intelligence, voices, musical performances, and concerted movements. These phenomena were shown in various public places in England, but a disgraceful clamour arose, founded upon ignorance and prejudice, and the young men were chased from the stage.

It was found that in practice there was at that time greater religious freedom in the wild western towns of America than in such old centres as Liverpool.

Finally, on the excuse that certain conjurers could with appliances and under their own conditions produce a clumsy imitation of these psychic effects, the matter was shelved, the public mind was doped, and every one returned to the old material dreams from which this sudden intrusion of outside force had temporarily aroused them.

In vain an excellent clergyman, Dr. Ferguson, described how he had travelled for six months with the mediums and seen an uninterrupted series of miracles.

In vain men of position testified that what they

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did was utterly different to anything which Maskelyne or any other conjurer could show.

The world was sunk in too deep a sloth to rise to the new possibilities, and the latter were disposed of by talking henceforth of the Davenport swindlers and the Davenport rope "trick."

The time is coming, however, when a tardy justice will be done to their memory, as to the poor Fox girls, Home, and all the other persecuted exponents of the humble but necessary physical signs. Ira Davenport died recently in his American home, while his brother William's grave is at Sydney.

The chair was taken for me at Buffalo by a local lawyer, Mr. E. C. Randall, whose book *The Dead Have Never Died* is familiar to most Spiritualists. Mr. Randall founds most of the information in this remarkable book upon his experiences with Mrs. Emily French, a wonderful voice-medium, who passed away recently at the age of eighty-one.

In her old age when she was so frail that she could hardly rise from her chair, and her normal voice was a mere whisper, the accents of her control, Redjacket, would resound through the house. Mr. Funk, a most careful observer and at that time a non-Spiritualist, has recorded in his *Psychic Riddle* how he tested and confirmed these observations.

Speaking of the laughter of one spirit, Mr. Funk says, "It is as easy to think of a rabbit barking like a bull-dog or bellowing like a bull as to think of one physically made up as Mrs. F. producing such a laugh." Who then produced it? How long can the world continue to ignore such evidence as that?

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CHAPTER IX

Niagara Electric Power—Under the Falls—Toronto—Remarkable Circle—Sir Donald Mann—The Twentieth Plane—A Liberal Dean—Detroit—American Hotels.

We were greatly interested at Niagara by the new electric-power developments upon the Canadian side. It represents far the greatest thing in this line that has ever been done, and is an example of practical Socialism, as it is financed by a number of municipalities with public money.

As it is costing a good deal more than the estimate, the ratepayers are looking blue, but I expect they will resume their normal colour when the results begin to show, for they expect to get 600,000 horse-power and to run huge factories of all sorts. It should be a national asset.

The idea was to tap the river above the falls, to make a canal 13 miles long, and then to throw this canal down a tube 300 feet deep, until the 20-foot rush of water hits the turbine at the bottom and so converts itself into electric force. They have had smaller plants running both on the American and on the Canadian sides, so there is no question as to the feasibility.

Our whole party put on waterproofs and made its way down the dark and slippery duck-boarded passage which suddenly emerges right under the fall, which roars and spouts in front and on either side of you.

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Niagara, its colossal strength and impression of might, never has been described and never will be.

Down at the base as much water seems to be ascending from the shock as descending from above, and wild, mad turmoil is the result, which is intensified by the terrible din.

To look upwards from the platform and see the sun shine dimly through the great arch of yellow water above you, as through alabaster, is one of the most wonderful impressions in the world.

Certainly the children will never forget it. We take a great responsibility in breaking their education, but surely there are bigger things and more vital than Euclid or Algebra. Few adults have travelled so much as they, and yet we flatter ourselves that they have retained all their freshness. Mother-love is the best of all head-masters.

It is curious that Niagara, which is probably the chief tourist resort in the world, is singularly weak in hotels. If it were in Switzerland there would be a dozen. As it is, there are only one or two on either bank which can be called decent. The result is that visitors are birds of passage, with no temptation to stay, as they might well do, in that wonderful atmosphere.

They have stretched a wire rope, or several, over the broad expanse of the Whirlpool, and they run a small car across it with passengers. It was an alarming sight for us to see our whole family in this small box suspended hundreds of feet above that dreadful place. However, they made the double transit in all comfort.

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It looks a frail thing, however, and I only pray that some terrible disaster may not occur there some day. It was down here that poor Webb lost his life. The people who found his body say that there was no wound upon it and that death must have been caused by absolute exhaustion and heart failure from the buffeting which he had received.

From Niagara I passed on to Toronto upon Sunday, May 14th, leaving my party behind with the agreement that we should join up again on the way to Detroit. Something had greatly wearied me, and all this part of my pilgrimage seems like a grey dream, broken only by vivid patches while I was on the platform.

Our friends the clergy had been preparing trouble for me in Toronto, and there was hostility in the air, which had found some expression in the Press and a good deal in the pulpits. Canon Cody distinguished himself by a sermon in which he mourned my falling-off from the days when I used to write detective stories, and declared, from the profound abyss of his ignorance, that nothing worth knowing had ever come through Spiritualism.

The reviewers treated me splendidly, however, and my meeting, though it suffered a little in size through the clerical attacks, was still very large and representative.

The Press reports next day were also very good, and one of the papers had a review of the scientific work done upon ectoplasm, which was ahead of anything I have seen in the London Press.

I spoke for an hour and three quarters, so I had some excuse for feeling exhausted. My references

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to the unfair and ignorant attitude of the clergy were always received with loud applause.

I have had the good fortune to encounter a very high circle in Toronto who have been developing upon their own lines with remarkable results. I learned much from them, but there are reasons why I should not mention their names, as their work is still only half completed. I found their revelation a very satisfying one, abounding in evidence, and giving me a good deal which was new.

I have seldom received a greater accession of strength and wisdom. They have found in their work that undeveloped spirits need continual checking and watching, but a complete test lies in the words, "I believe in God."

If a communication by word or writing is coming through, that is the password which never fails. It is perhaps the same test which St. John meant, for when he said, "Test the spirits," he presumably had something definite in his mind. The head of the circle, whom I will call Mr. Stone, had lost a relative, and was grieved to hear that he was still in darkness even though several years had elapsed. He had a vision of him, bronzed in colour and rather swollen in features, looking very unhappy.

He was told that prayer would help, and he prayed with such fervour that in a short time his brother's spirit was actually over the line which separates dark from light.

This happy event was announced to each of the four who composed the circle separately, so that when they met they found that each had received the glad

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news. The next stage immediately after the dark, in which one may be submerged so long, is said to be the garden stage, where one recuperates before going higher.

All the teaching of this circle, contained in volumes and volumes of typed reports, seemed to be very lofty and definite.

I spent some hours in driving round Toronto, which has greatly extended and improved since my first visit, nearly thirty years before. It has a massive solidity which is essentially Canadian. They are a wonderful people, strong, unbending, obstinate, good friends and dangerous enemies.

The insensate hostility which many American newspapers have shown to the British Empire has deeply alienated them from their neighbours, and they are almost fierce in their loyalty. Nowhere else in all my travels have I had "God save the King!" sung as the termination of my lecture.

I had the pleasure of meeting some of the Canadian officers whom we were privileged to entertain during the war when a Canadian division was stationed at Crowborough. Another person of interest whom I met was Sir Donald Mann, who drove the Great Northern Railway through the prairies and over the Rockies, an amazing feat when one considers how few towns were on the road—in fact, the line went first and the towns followed.

He looks the man for such a job, broad and square, cut out of granite, with a powerful, impassive face and two eyes which, from under their drooping lids, miss nothing which passes. If all else failed him, he

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could find a job as the iron man of affairs in the movies.

I also met at the lecture one of the orderlies who had served under me in the Langman Hospital in the South African War.

Spiritualism is in a curious condition in Toronto. There are six or eight small churches run upon a low plane, which will, I hope, unite and rise to a higher one. There is a good deal of indifferent mediumship, mostly of a very worldly fortune-telling order. Apart from this there was a Society, calling itself "The Twentieth Plane," which is best known because a member of it, Dr. Watson, wrote two books upon it, one under that name, and the other *Death is Birth*.

The medium was a Mr. Benjamin, a young Jew, whose communications are undeniably lofty, though they are disfigured by that use of great names, Shelley, Coleridge, even Sappho, which is possibly the fault of the control rather than of the medium. The actual messages are all on a high plane, though vague and unevidential.

I had a private sitting with Mr. Benjamin in my room at the hotel, and received while he was in a trance state (he allows pins to be driven into him) certain messages which carried no particular conviction, but were none the less helpful and weighty.

Whether his messages be of the spirit, or whether they be the emerging, under trance, of some subconscious personality, they can have nothing but an elevating effect.

There were some rather bitter attacks in the Toronto papers, including one leader in the *Evening Telegram*

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which was so narrow and illiberal that I do not think the most provincial paper in Britain could have been guilty of it.

It was to the effect that British lecturers took money out of the town, that they did not give the money's worth, and that they should be discouraged.

"Poking Them in the Eye" was the dignified title.

It did not seem to occur to the writer that a comic opera or a bedroom comedy was equally taking the money out of the town, but that the main purpose served by lectures, whether one agreed with the subject or not, was that they kept the public in first-hand touch with the great current questions of mankind. I am bound to say that no other Toronto paper sank to the depth of the *Evening Telegram,* but the general atmosphere was the least pleasant that I had met with in my American travels, and I was glad to unite with my family once more, and to find myself among the kindly folks of Detroit.

There I found myself in a very sympathetic community, and was told as a welcome that Dean Rogers of St. Paul's Cathedral had given a sermon, and a broadcasted radio sermon at that, to commend my attempt to spiritualise our petrified Churches and material social life.

It is an interesting fact that Dean Edwards, who was the predecessor of Dean Rogers at St. Paul's, became a convinced Spiritualist, after being brought by Mrs. Wriedt into contact with his son. Dean Edwards resigned his position, and it is greatly hoped by the Spiritualists of America that he will now devote his eloquence and his learning, for both of which he is

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famed, to the cause, which needs educated advocates so badly.

We in England mainly connect the prosperity of Detroit with the genius of Henry Ford, but there are, as a matter of fact, many other industries, and even among the motor firms there are others, such as Dodge Brothers, which are of great extent.

These two brothers had worked up from obscurity and had established a splendid business, finally building two grand houses at Grosse Pointe, where they were to enjoy the leisure that they had earned. Each of them, as I understand, died before their respective houses were completed—an example, if one were needed, of the futility of human ambitions.

It is likely that they took something more permanent out of their hard-working lives, for there is much virtue in these self-made men. I have always thought that Henry Ford's peace voyage during the war was a very noble attempt, all the more so for its pathetic absurdity.

The man who will venture something in a big cause, even if he utterly fails, is the man who rises above ordinary human stature, and surely the difficult failure is more honourable than the facile success. The humble manufacturer of Detroit rushing in to separate the warring kings and kaisers was a comic relief at the time, but it is a notable thing to look back upon.

Under the kind guidance of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Larned we drove round the beautiful Island Park, once a wilderness of rattlesnakes, which could only be exterminated by the aid of droves of hogs. Now it is one of the most beautiful popular pleasure-grounds

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in the world, with all those conveniences for picnic parties which are usual in such places in America, tables, seats, and even little stoves or ovens.

When I see all these amenities of life, my heart yearns over our own poor north-country towns, which seem to me to stand in a class by themselves for ugliness and discomfort. Think of the huge waste grounds with their littered garbage, and the prim, unhomely tidiness of such parks as exist. I suppose that the root reason lies in the age of these towns, and that they were laid out before modern ideas prevailed, but their citizens should cast off their self-contentment and strive for better things—above all, the wealthy men should take a pride in the place from which they draw their wealth and should exert themselves to adorn it.

There should be no place in the universe for the kind of town which is common in Northern England, where slatternly folk, who seem to have lost all personal self-respect, beshawled women, and ill-clad men live in dull, smoke-covered brick streets with cindered paths leading to their daily toil.

"This world is Hell," said Bernard Shaw, and there are places where the thought seems natural.

No patriotism can possibly conceal from the travelling Briton the fact that our hotels have a great deal to learn from those in America. I write these words in the Statler Hotel of Detroit. The bedroom is furnished with the well-equipped writing-table which I am using, with paper and pens always ready and in order. Beside me lies a card with a request that the occupant be not disturbed. This I can fasten on my door.

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On the dressing-table is a pin-cushion with a black button, a white button, and sewing materials for emergencies.

A telephone by the bed and a fully furnished bath-room are matters of course, as is a deep cupboard, beloved of ladies, and the thermos bottle of iced water.

On the other hand, the waiting is much quicker in our hotels, and with the set courses one has not all the trouble of selection and the tedium of from a quarter of an hour to twenty minutes' delay while you sit at an empty table.

In most modern hotels, however, they have what is called a cafeteria, which is really a splendid arrangement, by which you pick what you want, carry it off on a small tray, and have no waiting whatever. This is so entirely simple and satisfactory that I think it is destined to have a very general use, and the only objection, as in every improvement, is that it would certainly throw a great number of waiters out of employment.

Even in smaller American towns, such as Toledo, the hotels are extraordinarily good. Londoners may be surprised to hear it, but the Hotel Secor in that city has a hall and vestibule which would compare for elegance with any in London.

Its dead gold and white marble, with innumerable really comfortable arm-chairs, make it a dream for the weary traveller. On the other hand, we may say for the Old Country that our provincial inns, half curiosity shops and half homes, stand by themselves in the whole world.

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CHAPTER X

Madame Economus—Press Descriptions—An Iron Monster—Miss Ada Besinnet—A Wonderful Séance—Keedick and Shackleton—Fraud and Reality.

We had a sitting at Detroit with an amateur medium, Mrs. Economus, an Austrian lady married to a Greek. The results were marred by the fact that several people were present. A clairvoyant reading should, I think, always be solitary, as the matter is quite complex and obscure enough without mixing a number of impressions.

The medium was a tall, handsome woman with commanding features, and when the spirit-influence came upon her and she stood fixing you with glaring eyes and talking in a deep male voice, one seemed to see a Pythian priestess at the shrine of Apollo. She spoke with tremendous force and emphasis, but nothing which could really be called evidential came through.

The control purported to be a Buddhist influence, and he prophesied a revolution in India unless the Government made concessions. It needed no voice from beyond, however, to point out the danger of that.

Many kind things came across as to my own work, and it was prophesied that in ten years these views would generally prevail. We were both impressed by the sincerity of the medium, though positive proofs were lacking.

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An enormous meeting concluded our day, when, in spite of pouring rain, 3,000 people assembled in a most difficult hall. However, my one great qualification for my job is audibility, and I think I got every word across during the hour and three quarters that I was on my feet. Like all American audiences, it was very courteous and sympathetic.

We heard of people who had come from Dayton and other places 200 miles away for the meeting.

At Toledo, a very rising and beautifully wooded town, we met an impressionist reporter, who certainly kept my head in its due proportions.

His description was:

"The visitor was dressed in an ill-fitting grey suit which was in bad need of pressing, and he wore a frayed white collar. His hair was grey and his head partially bald."

I think I have had enough to make it so, with reporters of that sort catching me after a train journey. However, it was all in good humour, and the town treated us royally, and filled a hall to overflowing in the evening.

A kindly resident, Mrs. Bentley, put her motor at our disposal and enabled us to appreciate the wonderful suburbs with their miles of luxurious villas, built with the most extraordinary mixture of architectural styles. There was less sign of wealth than in Detroit, but none the less it was very impressive. We stopped the car, and delighted the children and ourselves by watching the process of loading a lake steamer with coal. It was certainly a fascinating business.

The steamer lay passive, like a beast being fed, and

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the trucks were run up an inclined plane, and then tipped over into the hold. But the wonder of it was the means by which the laden truck got up the inclined plane. It came along the line with a slow momentum, and was just pausing at the bottom of the hill, when out of the ground between the tracks there darted a horrid little deformed monster of iron which pursued the truck, acting on its own without a driver, put its head at the back of it and butted it up the incline.

When the truck had been seized by the discharging gear, the squat iron monster came slowly down the slope and vanished into the ground once more, only to dart out when another truck had passed. It was a marvellous example of ingenuity and efficiency, but it clearly does a hundred men out of their daily bread.

It seems to me that the economic end of the human race will be that half of them will be making contrivances to do the other half out of their jobs. Then perhaps the other half will rise up in protest, and that may be the political end.

From many quarters I learned the effect of my visit to Toledo. One level-headed journalist wrote:

"There is no doubt of the good your coming has done. Many were thoroughly convinced. Thousands of others who heard you at the Colosseum or through the Press are ready to give sane and intelligent consideration to the subject. I feel certain that the superstructure you reared on the foundations laid by Miss Besinnet's work will be lasting and the beginning of bigger things spiritually."

Another who represented a large New York paper, and who had no disposition in our favour, said:

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"You have had such an effect all over the country that the papers dare no longer ridicule this thing, for the public would not stand it."

Surely, then, that prophecy which came before we left England has been richly fulfilled. An editor wrote:

"Most pleased I was to see your listeners. Faces fixed and thinking, I saw. You could have heard a pin drop during your whole hour and a half of speech. Greater subject could no man have. Poor humanity, how slowly it learns the truth—the simple obvious truth!"

We did not leave Toledo without a sitting with Miss Ada Besinnet—indeed, it was the prospect of such a sitting which caused me to add Toledo to my list of fixtures. I had already sat four times with this medium in England, and was certain not only of her honesty but of the extraordinary nature of her powers.

Twice during my sittings I have seen beyond all doubt or question the faces of the dead in front of me, once that of my mother and once that of my nephew, Oscar Hornung. The latter smiled at me. I saw the flash of his teeth, and I noted his large grey eyes, while those of the medium are hazel.

Both my mother and my nephew were looking very well and happy, clean-cut and refined in expression, though my mother retained or at any rate reproduced her wrinkles. I may add that one of these sittings was in my own home, on which occasion every one of my non-spiritualist friends had the same experience.

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The faces are often not evidential and mask-like, but occasionally are intensely alive and exact in detail. They sometimes bear some resemblance to the medium herself in the early phases, but after the power has increased you get old men, babies, and double faces at the same time, so that there is no possibility of simulation.

I am, however, quite prepared to accept the view that when the power is low the face may be a mask of ectoplasm built up on the medium's own features as a mould. Such a process is no less wonderful than an independent materialisation. There is ample evidence, however, that the latter occurs as well.

Neither Keedick, my manager, nor Widdecombe, our guide, had seen psychic phenomena, though both had been so mixed up with Sir Oliver and with myself. I was glad, therefore, when Miss Besinnet extended an invitation to them to be present.

The other sitters were Mr. Roche, a very level-headed, middle-aged journalist who had closely watched the medium's development for some years, and three or four members of her usual circle, who by their sympathy might counteract the somewhat neutral vibrations of the newcomers.

The séance was a very remarkable one and absolutely convincing to all who were present. Brilliant lights are part of the medium's power, and even before she had sunk into trance they were flying up in graceful curves as high as the ceiling and circling back upon us. One nearly rested upon my hand. It seems to be a cold light and its nature has never been

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determined, but perhaps the cold vital light of the firefly may be an analogy.

Dr. Cushman has exposed photographic plates upon the table and has got clear impressions of the lights, which photographs I have seen. They, alone of all known lights, do not fog the plates in the least, but in his experiments come out clean-cut and vivid.

The gramophone was then started to give vibrations and presently a very beautiful whistling mixed with the music.

I asked it to stop and then to continue, so as to be sure that it was not itself a gramophone record. In each case it obeyed.

A powerful male voice then sang two songs with a vigour and charm which would be worth a handsome salary in the Halls. This person explained that he was an American soldier, Dan, who had died in the Philippines.

Several times, Mr. Roche tells me, he had materialised and stood, visible to the waist, saluting in military fashion.

A beautiful tambourine accompaniment to the gramophone followed, said to be from Lenore, a Spanish dancer, who has also repeatedly shown herself.

Sentimental songs, in a strong female contralto, followed. The materialised lips and cheeks have been touched by Dr. Pyle, the family physician, and others quite separate from the medium, but it is found that a sympathetic movement occurs in the medium's own organs, which can, however, be muffled in cloth without in any way affecting the sound.

The Intelligence explained this by saying: "The me-

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dium's throat and organs are used, but she does not do the whistling or singing. We use her and build up from her"—a somewhat enigmatic saying in our present state of knowledge.

This varied entertainment was presided over by a very guttural and laconic Indian, Black Cloud, who occasionally shouts out an order, and it is enlivened by a small girlish spirit, named Pansy, with a squeaky childish voice, who moves about, makes remarks, and in spite of the dark reproves you at once if you yawn.

She is not in sympathy with the silent Indian and is inclined to be pert, for when he said, "Squaws talk too much," she answered, "Some chiefs talk too much sometimes," which elicited a grunt of contempt.

Then the faces began. They glimmer up out of the darkness, a glow comes beside them, and then they vanish. Our first one, seen equally by my wife and me, was a truly angelic female face, so pure and sweet that no great master has ever painted such a Madonna. It had the psychic arch over the brow.

Then came others with a certain suggestion of various friends on the other side, but none so clear that I could positively swear to it.

Captain Widdecombe had the same experience, many faces but none surely recognisable.

Mr. Keedick was more fortunate. I suddenly heard him cry with the gasping note of extreme surprise and emotion, "Shackleton!" The great explorer, who had been an intimate friend, had suddenly appeared with his face as clear as life and within a few inches of his own. Those who know Mr. Keedick will be

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aware that he is a strong-nerved, practical man, and the very last to imagine such an incident.

At the end of the séance a considerable apparition was built up before us representing a woman down to her waist, with drapery over her head, the whole forming an absolute copy of the Katie King photograph which I am in the habit of showing in my lecture.

My wife cried out, "It is the same face, the same dress, the same drapery—it is Katie King!"

Three loud raps in or on the table at once assented. A moment later an elderly man with very well-marked nose appeared before me, and Mr. Keedick also saw him. Mr. Keedick described him as having an imperial, but the lower part of the face was vague as I saw it.

It was certainly very like Sir William Crookes, who might be expected to manifest in connexion with Katie King, but I could not absolutely affirm it.

Katie King was, of course, the materialised spirit who for two years manifested in Crookes's own study in Mornington Road in 1872-73, as detailed by him in the *Quarterly Journal of Science*.

It is one of the misfortunes and reproaches of Spiritualism that such valuable literary and evidential documents as Crookes's own account of this all-important episode should get out of print and be inaccessible. An American publisher, Doran, is considering republishing it, on condition that I write a preface, which I have promised, though I am ashamed of the number of prefaces to psychic books which I have already turned out.

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The séance ended by a letter for each of us, written in the dark, and presumably by the direct hand of the entranced medium. Mine was from my son and was in the highest degree evidential.

He wrote: "Oscar and Uncle Willy are both here with you."

These are father and son, both upon the other side, of whose existence or relation to my boy the medium had no possible means of knowing.

"Uncle Willy" was only uncle by marriage, and yet my son always called him by that name.

Altogether if I had not proved this matter a hundred times before, this sitting alone would have brought me conviction. I only hope that the pure and beautiful mediumship of Miss Besinnet will remain fresh and uncontaminated, so that she may continue to be the very special instrument of God which she now is.

A Committee in connexion with the Psychic College in London reported upon Miss Besinnet's mediumship, and came to the conclusion that the faces were always built up upon her own by psychic means—that is to say, that her control forms an ectoplasmic mask upon her own face.

I am convinced that when the power is weak this is what actually occurs, and I have myself, as I have said, clearly seen the medium's features. Controls often take short cuts to produce their effects, and so expose the innocent and unconscious medium to unjust suspicions.

But Miss Besinnet's health was bad, and her powers were proportionately low at the time when the Lon-

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don Committee reported upon her, and I am convinced that Mr. Hewat McKenzie, who drew up the report, did her a serious though of course unintentional injustice.

I have not only my own clear observations to support me, and those of my friends, but I have had access to a number of detailed reports from close observers in Toledo which show results which could in no way be accounted for by a mere ectoplasmic transfiguration of the medium's face.

Thus Mr. Budborough of Bristol, in a careful and detailed report, says:

"The spirit of a powerfully built Indian chief suddenly stood in our midst—on his head a war bonnet made of eagle feathers and round his neck a necklace of grizzly-bear claws. This figure came so close to us that we could have touched it, had we dared. It remained in evidence for about two minutes and then slowly faded away."

This form was no doubt that of the laconic Indian control.

One lady whose husband had become blind before passing over says: "The first materialisation I had was that of the nerve and of the congested eyeball. Then came his eyes, big, blue, and beautiful, as they used to be."

It will be admitted that this at least must have been an independent materialisation.

Another in describing a spirit says: "The light was so strong as to show the seated form of the medium behind the figure."

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Another says: "I have distinctly seen the form rise up from the centre of the table."

Another says: "Dan materialised in uniform and stood at salute."

On several occasions a mother holding a baby had appeared.

I have so keen a sense of the good work which Mr. Hewat McKenzie has done for psychic science that it is repugnant to me to disagree with him, but I am convinced that he has argued too much from temporary and personal experiences and not given sufficient weight to general evidence, and that in so doing he has done a serious injustice to one of the greatest mediums that the world has ever known.

Toledo seems to be a rich psychic centre, for there is a second medium, a Mr. Johnson, who is said to have exceptional powers of materialisation, but he was in California at the time of our visit and so it was impossible to test him.

It seems that during our Besinnet séance four enterprising old ladies in a Ford car drove up to the house and stationed themselves under the window of the séance room. As it was pouring with rain and as the proceedings lasted several hours, they certainly deserved whatever they got—whether information or rheumatism.

I have spoken of the possible short-circuiting of the Control during trance which lays the unfortunate medium under suspicion of fraud. It may be the Control or it may be the half-automatic instinct of the medium herself acting independently of the higher

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centres which are out of action, being possessed by an outside entity. You will find mediums do silly and obvious things which are quite unnecessary and clearly bogus.

Then the next moment you may see some real psychic manifestation, quite beyond all possibility of fraud. I fancy that every student of the occult has had such experiences. Palladino, for example, with whom I have never sat, would think nothing of kicking the leg of the table to produce sounds, or putting up her hand to weigh down a pair of scales. Such obvious tricks disconcerted Hodgson and others, who pronounced her to be a cheat at Cambridge, and yet the small committee, Feilding, Carrington, and Baggaley, who followed her to Naples found ample proof of her real powers. Yet even while endorsing her Feilding says: "She does silly little tricks by slipping one hand or one foot, or kicking you, or pulling the curtain—all absolutely unlike the real thing. Even then she is in a real trance and is, I am sure, unaware of having cheated when she wakes up." Dr. Fournier d'Albe's observation that he saw Miss Golligher kick a footstool is an example of the same sort.

It is an important matter, for it illustrates the pitfalls of psychic research and emphasises the fact that so long as you get positive results which are certain you can afford to regard the negative ones as of no consequence. The present method is to concentrate upon the negative ones and imagine that they entirely do away with everything positive.

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CHAPTER XI

Effect of the Children—Negroes—Summer Time Chaos—Radio and Psychic Power—Lecture in the Rain—Height Altitude—Malcolm's First Flight—Colonel West—Mrs. Pruden's Mediumship.

The children are what the Americans call good mixers, and their jovial, smiling British faces have, I am sure, left a trail of good feeling behind us. It is most amusing to listen to their conversation and to notice the effect which it has upon their chance acquaintances.

To-day on the way from Toledo to Chicago they were seated in the dining-car beside a very staid business man of mature years, while we sat at the next table, and our horrified ears caught occasional snatches of the unbroken conversation. "Were you ever in a railway accident?" "Yes. I was in my bunk and the engine jumped the line." "Oh, how lovely! Where did it jump to?" "What made it jump?" "What had you on in your bunk?" "Did you wait to dress?" "Well, then, how did you manage?" "What did the people say?"

Muttered explanations from the good-natured traveller.

Then we catch an outburst again. "Did you ever fire a revolver?" "Who at?" "Was it a poisonous snake?" "How long was the snake?" "Have you

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ever been in Florida?" "We are taking a snake home with us." "Have you ever been chased by Indians?" "Would they torture you if they caught you?"

These dear good Americans try to keep up, but it is breathless work, and they love it and become children themselves before they are through. Mr. Keedick, my manager and good friend, forgets all about business when he is near them.

He has started them with a baseball set, and they are already "fans," "rooters," and every other word for enthusiasts. To-day they came back from a game shining with joy, because Alexander, a famous pitcher, had given each a ball, and they had been photographed holding his hands.

I have taken such chances as I could to have chats with the negro waiters on the cars, and I have found some of them very well-informed and intelligent men. One of them told me that he had been a medical student until he had been forced to quit "by this accursed colour bar."

Several of them were interested in psychic subjects, and they have a fine lecturer and medium of their own race in Mrs. Crear of Columbus, who afterwards made a very favourable impression at the International Spiritual Congress in London.

Altogether I found myself of quite a contrary opinion to a friend who maintained that they were really of a different order of reason to ourselves. One of his anecdotes, even if apocryphal, was amusing.

A negro lodged twenty-five dollars at a negro bank. A few years later he called to draw his money. "No, no," said the cashier, also a negro. "It was only

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twenty-five at the beginning, and the interest has done gone eat that up long ago."

The Sun, the American Congress, and Mr. Willett of Sloane Square in high cabal have messed things up in such a way that one can never tell in travelling in this country what the time may be. When I remember that gentle, little white mouse of a man, whose early efforts I supported, it is a most comical thing to think that he has had a more direct and in some ways a more confusing effect upon mankind than any modern reformer.

He was really, under his humble exterior (I remember him in a bowler hat and a frock coat), a great, original-minded Englishman, and deserves any posthumous honour that could be paid him. But in America he has done things to drive one crazy. Some States have adopted him and some have not, and you never know when you are over the border. One mile of longitude makes you an hour late for dinner. Then, on the top of this, Congress has forbidden the railways to alter their time so as to match with the local change, so that there is local time and also railway time with an hour of difference.

When in addition you realise that the clock is naturally changed in any case by an hour to every thousand miles as you go westward, you will understand why the lunacy statistics are steadily rising.

I spent my first morning in Chicago at the Loomis Street Headquarters of the Spiritualists, where they have a fine, solid, well-furnished place, not unlike Mr. Hewat McKenzie's Psychic College in London.

A young medium and inventor, Mr. Burket, was

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waiting for me with an amplifying machine with which he hoped to be able to reinforce the human ear, and so get fine whispers, possibly preternatural, far above what we can hear normally.

My own feeling is that what we need is an apparatus which will not only amplify but will turn high sounds into low ones, for I could conceive that the buzz of a mosquito would be a deep bass compared to the octaves, if any, on which etheric sounds would register. Mr. Burket assured me that he had actually got messages, and the future may prove that he is on the right track.

The amplifier increased sound a hundredfold, and could theoretically do so a thousandfold, but for some reason which is beyond my limited science, after the hundredfold point a sort of droning echo sets in, like the moan heard in a seashell, but infinitely louder, and this drowns all other sounds—the howling of the valves is the technical name, I think, of this phenomenon.

We sat with a strong circle, Mrs. Cadwalader, one of the leaders of the Spiritualists, and editor of the *Progessive Thinker,* Colonel West, Dr. Burgess, and Mrs. Langley, the latter a veteran medium. I strained my ear at the huge horn from which sound issues, but alas! I could get nothing.

I was sorry for the young inventor, who was cast down at the result; but if he is on the true path he will surely emerge in time. I have a strong feeling that it is on this line, radio plus amplifier, that we shall open up fruitful lines of research.

In spite of our familiarity with great meetings,

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Chicago rather took our breath away. We were certainly ending on our top note. All seats were sold out by the afternoon, and there were 250 people crammed on to the platform. It was with some difficulty that my wife and I reached our central chairs.

It was a wonderful bank, or series of banks, of faces, stretching away back into the gloom. My wife tells me that I rose to the occasion. I was moved myself and so perhaps I was able to move others. There was hardly a cough or a movement for the hour and a half of the address.

When I ended there were cries for my wife, and I glanced at her, but she prefers not to speak in public.

If she could let her burning feelings have full play, and voice her deep womanly desire to bring comfort to the stricken, she would be a world-force. She has that human touch, that natural touch of the heart, which no man can ever attain. Those whom she has personally consoled by voice or letter will realise what I mean.

When we got into the street it was raining heavily and Widdecombe disappeared in search of a cab. In an instant, under the pelting shower, a group of people, without an umbrella among them, pressed round us with eager questions about life and death. A poor ragged man with unsold papers under his arm was the most eager. Why did we remember nothing before birth? What about reincarnation?

They were eager to know more, but the cab came and we left them still arguing—a scene no man could invent.

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The good Spiritualists of Chicago had arranged a reception very much on the lines of that which we had in Melbourne over a year ago.

It was a very pleasant evening, but instead of congregations, only delegates seem to have been present, so that the numbers were not imposing. I had hoped that it would have been an occasion for showing our strength, whereas it gave a wrong impression to the Press as to our numbers. However, the proceedings were very hearty and cheerful and we received so many flowers that the cab was absolutely filled with them.

I proposed that an obelisk be built by international subscription and erected at Rochester, and the proposal was well received. We put forward two hundred and fifty dollars and the Chicago Headquarters did the same, so we start level.

The task of collecting the money in England has been left to me. I can only hope that they will take my view, but for some reason we have never found our people very generous and many continually receive the greatest of all blessings at our hands without any return. It is at present the same small group of men and women who do all the work and find all the money.

I had an interesting talk while in Chicago with Major Schroeder, who broke the height record in 1920 in his aeroplane. He reached 37,000 feet. At that point something went wrong with his oxygen tube and he fell down in the car among the carbon monoxide which came from the exhaust.

This poisonous stuff would soon have killed him,

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but the machine, left to itself, fell seven miles in less than three minutes. The improved air revived Schroeder and he was able to regain command when only about 1,800 feet above earth.

Fancy falling like a stone for seven miles! I am not sure if it is a nightmare or a dream of bliss. He had read my story *The Horror of the Heights,* and admitted to me that he always at great altitudes had a subconscious fear that he might meet some new form of life. "Look out for those big angle worms!" they had called to him as he left the ground.

After all, the deepest sea sustains life—why not the highest air? As a matter of fact, the only strange thing he ever saw was a flight of snow-white birds, like robins, flying at 12,000 feet altitude. Also drifting spider webs with spiders still on them.

The great problem is to prevent your eyes freezing, which is done by double glasses with a sort of thermos arrangement. No one, he thinks, will ever get much higher, because the tenuous air will not give a grip to the machine. Altogether I was very interested in our talk.

The reporters are certainly hard to please. In Toledo they proclaimed, probably with truth, that I was careless of dress. In Chicago they described me as an exquisite, or at any rate they depicted me as wearing a light blue suit, a purple tie, purple silk socks, and white slippers.

The latter I must plead guilty to, and they would have elicited "Niagara, I perceive," from the late Mr. Holmes, for the children gave them to me there as a local curiosity.

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The papers have been making free with the children also, saying, to their great indignation:

"The young Doyles are bored stiff with their parent's Spiritualism, but want more yarns from him."

"I'd like to see that editor," said Denis grimly as he read it. "Same here!" piped the small voice of Billy. "I am bored stiff with his paper," said Malcolm. But the Press usually holds the balance true in the end, and they have actually published Malcolm's first story, which is told in a series of pictures in the *Evening American.*

They are really excellent, and we are all very pleased at it, from the first legend, "The black gang going to raid the house of James Banker, a millionaire," through "'Hands up, you dog!' cried the Captain," up to "We drop a bomb on one of the motor-cars of the Black Gang."

The picture of the young author in a moment of inspiration was appended.

Chicago is the very noisiest city I have ever known. It is a serious drawback to its amenity. All the pavements seem to rumble, all the trains whistle, the taxis hoot, the brakes grind, and the wheels scream. It has other disadvantages in that the Blackstone Hotel at which we stayed is the most expensive and least accommodating that we had met. It is meant for millionaires and we were out of the picture.

Our rooms alone cost a good ten pounds a day, and the service of a meal cost as much as a meal itself would have done in England. On the other hand, the great lake is splendid, and I see it sparkling in the sun even as I write. The drives and parks are

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beautiful, and the people among the kindest and best that we have met. The level of prices is far higher than in New York, and if I may encroach upon mysteries, the general level of ladies' dresses, etc., at Marshall Field's, and the whole attraction of the establishment, are far inferior to such rivals as Macy's in New York or Shoolbred's in London.

The Chicago Press treated me with great courtesy and I had very fair play, in spite of a howl from one Voliva, who is the head of Zion City and successor of Dr. Dowie. He attacked on the ancient lines of Demonism, but his argument was not very effective, and I have seen the points, such as they are, better made.

From my point of view, it is almost as important to religion, in this age of unimaginative materialism, to show the existence of an evil spirit as of a good one. Anything to make us understand that we are in the midst of great unseen forces and that three meals a day and a feather bed do not fill all the possibilities of life.

I had a long talk with Colonel West, of the United States Army, as to the causes which had led to his understanding these truths. Like myself, he had been an agnostic until these phenomena forced themselves upon his attention. One of his own little children developed automatic writing and wrote out the whole life of one George Smith of the Confederate Army, describing his imprisonment at Andersonville, his death and many family particulars which were afterwards verified.

As an example of how children grow up and are

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educated in the other world, one of his daughters died about two years old. Two years later she returned at a séance, lisped out a message of greeting, told that her grandfather Price was looking after her, and finally said some words of Welsh which he had taught her. Another child who had died at sea and was buried in the Pacific Ocean came back. "I am your little girl. Don't think that I was left in all that water," said she. The Colonel is in the same happy position as I, for his wife has shared the evidence and therefore feels the same convictions with equal strength.

Together they should be powerful instruments for good, now that he is free from his military duties. In the war he was the head of one of the greatest prison camps in the country.

As I look back upon the mediums whom we have tried in America it must be confessed that the result has not been striking. Save for Miss Besinnet, whose powers I had already tested, there has been nothing outstanding. I had been unable to meet the elder Keeler at Washington, though I am assured that his powers have been very real, though now somewhat impaired and under suspicion of the Researchers.

The criticism that his messages are all written in the same hand is really beside the point, for it is always admitted that, save in certain test cases, the writing is from the control using the medium. The younger Keeler was also unable to meet me, but the evidence is strong for his true powers upon occasion. For the rest we had one set back in New York, and several "as in a glass darkly," where gleams of evidence, like the "Floreat" of Mrs. Soule, came through

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a mist of words. Mr. John Ticknor was also interesting and impressive.

It was our good fortune now to come once again into contact with a really great medium in Mrs. Pruden of Cincinnati, who had come to Chicago for my lectures. We had a sitting in the Blackstone Hotel, through the courtesy of her host, Mr. Holmyard, and the results were splendid. She is an elderly, kindly woman with a motherly manner. Her particular gift was slate-writing which I had never examined before.

I had heard that there were trick slates, but she was anxious to use mine and allowed me to carefully examine hers. She makes a dark cabinet by draping the table, and holds the slate under it, while you may hold the other corner of it. Her other hand is free and visible. The slate is double with a little bit of pencil put in between.

After a delay of half an hour the writing began. It was the strangest feeling to hold the slate and to feel the thrill and vibration of the pencil as it worked away inside. We had each written a question on a bit of paper and cast it down, carefully folded, on the ground in the shadow of the drapery, that psychic forces might have correct conditions for their work, which is always interfered with by light.

Presently each of us got an answer to our question upon the slate, and were allowed to pick up our folded papers and see that they had not been opened. The room, I may say, was full of daylight and the medium of course could not stoop without our seeing it.

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I had some business this morning of a partly spiritual, partly material nature with a Dr. Gelbert, a French inventor. I asked in my question if this were wise. The answer on the slate was "Trust Dr. Gelbert. Kingsley." I had not mentioned Gelbert's name in my question, nor did Mrs. Pruden know anything of the matter.

My wife got a long message from a dear friend, signed with her name. The name was a true signature. Altogether it was a most utterly convincing demonstration. Sharp clear raps upon the table joined continually in our conversation.

It is certainly a very beautiful form of mediumship, and I have tried to persuade Mrs. Pruden, who is not a professional medium, to come over to the Psychic College and give demonstrations. The more I see of this subject the more I feel how indebted we are to Mr. and Mrs. Hewat McKenzie for that excellent Institution.

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CHAPTER XII

End of the Task—Mr. Ticknor's Mediumship—Action of the Control—Controversies—Quo Vadis?—Best-sellers—Lady Medium in Brooklyn—Striking Séance.

We have come to love New York, and it was a joy to all of us when, after twenty-four hours of the train, we were back at the Ambassador Hotel, and greeted once more by Charles the Second, as the children have wittily named the functionary with knee-breeches and buckles who presides in the hall. The real hot weather has set in, and though no heat will prevent my lecturing, as I have twice proved in the Red Sea, there is a limit to the endurance of audiences, so it is lucky that the work is done. Even as I write it I can hardly realise that the work *is* done, and without the slightest impediment or shadow. Never was there a more full or widespread ventilation of a great question over so great an area. The reception has been far more favourable than I could have anticipated, and though this may have been partly due to the courtesy which the Press has shown to a foreigner (how absurd the word seems when applied between British and Americans!), my stacks of letters show that it has also been very real. I did not of course expect audiences to stream out of the halls crying, "We are now Spiritualists!" How could I when I think how long it took to break down my own materialistic prejudices? Charlemagne converted the

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Saxons by battalions, but what was such a conversion worth? But people now are in a position to think intelligently, to read, to weave the new experiences which will come to them into the fabric which I have given, to discuss among themselves, and then finally, when some great loss comes upon them, or when the doctor shakes his head for the last time, to get a sudden flash of light, and to understand that they have gained something that no money could buy.

My unhappy non-psychic reader, if any has survived up to this point—which I should think is extremely unlikely—will probably imagine that he is now going to get a rest from this overmastering question. I fear, however, that it still engaged our thoughts and our activities. On our first clear evening we accepted an invitation from Mr. Fred Walcott, a financial authority, whom I had first in England introduced to psychic study. He had gathered together several earnest inquirers, some twelve in all. It was an interesting evening, and we had legal alcohol for the first time, our host's cellar being not yet quite empty. It must be dramatic as the stock sinks and there is no normal way of replenishing it. After dinner I showed and explained a few of my slides. We then had a very remarkable sitting with Mr. John Ticknor, whose powers I have already described. He is the very picture of normal prosperous health, with his white waistcoat and his clean-shaven ruddy face, but psychic power lurks in the most unlikely frames. I find on this second trial that I had tended to underrate and understate his powers. It had seemed to me that most of the information which Black Hawk, as his control

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is named, gave might have been obtained by some very active subconscious self, with the power of referring to literature, and might then be delivered by a dramatised secondary personality of Mr. Ticknor himself. These are the "normal" explanations with which one tries to dope one's mind. But they usually break down when tested. At this second sitting there was hardly a member of the company who did not get intimate messages from departed souls, with names and every particular, which could in no way be gathered. My mother, for example, reminded me how hot a day it was when we said farewell at our last earthly meeting. Several messages came to be delivered to absent people, dealing with pressing earthly matters. One of them, committed to my care, was to Miss Estelle Stead from her brother, and should be evidential if she corroborates the facts. I have to-day forwarded it. It is less precise in detail, however, than most of the others. Altogether it was a very convincing display, and New York is fortunate in the possession of such an amateur medium.

Black Hawk, the control, seemed a peppery sort of person. I had observed the same in the Indian control of Miss Besinnet. Why Indians should be specially interested with these powers, and be the janitors of the great gate, I cannot imagine, nor why nearly every voice-medium should have a child-spirit as a familiar. If it were all an invention of the mediums, as the sceptics would say, why should their invention and its practical rendering always take the same shape? We have certainly a very great deal to learn. Among other divisions of labour I have noticed that the East

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Indian is usually associated with the apport, and the Egyptian with philosophic learning.

Results such as were obtained by Mr. Ticknor—and they are typical of scores of séances which I have attended—are very suggestive. That Mr. Ticknor is in a real trance and that the information which he gives contains a far higher proportion of truth than could be got by any normal process, is perfectly certain. In this particular case five or six people got information which no private detective agency could have unearthed save after prolonged investigation. Where, then, can it come from? There are only two answers possible. The most obvious is that it is collected by the subconscious powers of the medium, which are greatly increased by trance, and which roam forth collecting and reporting. The other is that it is caused by the obsession of a new entity which has superhuman powers. My choice would be all for the first solution were it not that we must not treat these phenomena alone, but must correlate them with photography, materialisation, levitation, and the rest. A second reason is that we cannot treat as negligible the claim which is made by the medium's own voice while he is in trance. In many cases, however, I admit that a dramatised secondary personality is a possible explanation, though it presents very great difficulties. If, however, one adopts the idea of outside intervention, the matter does not end there. Instead of separate spirits it might all come from the single Control who uses his own powers and then personates the other spirits. I incline very much to this theory in many cases. A spirit-control has, I think, enormous powers

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of reference. All literature and possibly all thoughts are within his reach. The literary reference has been proved by a long series of elaborate book tests through Stainton Moses, Mrs. Leonard, and other mediums, who would give extracts from closed books in libraries as recorded by Lady Grey, the Rev. Drayton Thomas, and other observers.

Now consider in detail the personal information which Mr. John Ticknor was able to give me.

1. He gave me the names correctly of four relatives.

2. He knew that I had some connexion at some time with the late Major Willie Redmond, M.P.

3. He knew that I belonged to the Athenæum Club.

4. He knew that I was connected with some "contraption" (as he described it) on a bicycle.

All this was correct, and yet all could possibly have been gathered from my archives if some preternatural power could have scanned all those archives, but some of it, especially Nos. 2 and 4, were quite beyond what any inquirer could have discovered. When one remembers that he gave equally good information to half a dozen other people, one realises that it really is vain to explain it by normal causes. My conclusion, then, is that I am absolutely convinced of the honesty and powers of Mr. John Ticknor, but that I am not equally convinced of the complete veracity of his Control.

I have had to find time amid my journeys and my addresses for several newspaper controversies. I had not intended to enter into any, but when one is gently entreated to combat one cannot refuse. One was with

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a Mr. Green, who wrote a long, reasoned, open letter in the *Times* adopting a sort of Charles Richet position —that is, admitting the phenomena but denying the psychic. I answered by a string of examples from my own experience which were all inexplicable without the psychic. I think I made the matter clear. The other was in the *Tribune* with Mr. Maxim, the brother of my old acquaintance, the inventor. Mr. Maxim took a frankly material position, as his brother had done in life, though he tried to atone for it by reappearing at the side of Miss Scatcherd at Crewe, a really living likeness. I have sent a copy of this to his brother, and it may cause him to think. When American papers disagree, one usually has a courteous controversy of this kind, for they realise how absurd it is for the average journalist to make light of the views of many of greatest intellects of modern times. The want of proportion which allows the callow psychic researcher to speak with contempt of a Crookes or of a Lombroso is unknown here. I have in all my travels, outside Melbourne, seen nothing in the same class as the mixture of ignorance and insolence which appears in some London journals.

I do not for a moment suppose that amid the constant rush and pressure of American life my presentation of vital truth will make any immediate effect, save upon those who were very specially ready for it. But it will come later. To every man there may happen the day when the doctor puts away his stethoscope, averts his eyes, stammers out that his duty compels him, etc., etc. Then in the next hour that man may think of what I have told him of the vanity of theo-

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logical terrors, of the natural sequence of events at death, of the placid prospect of the hereafter if life here has not been wholly material. So also at that moment when he waits in an agony of apprehension, and there comes down the passage the slow, reluctant step which bears the tidings of death, once more after the first shock he may remember some echo of this teaching and he may steady his shattered life with the words: "Well, that fellow said he got his loved ones back. Why may not I?" It was Fenimore Cooper, the novelist, who on his death-bed said, "Bless the Fox sisters for the peace which I now feel!" What greater reward to any teacher than that? And how can we feel vexation, or anything but pity, for those who reject such a gift?

I sometimes fear that these wonderful manifestations are only a temporary glimpse and that the sullen waters of materialism may submerge the little island of other-world light. In that case it is more than ever necessary that we take careful records of what occurs. There is psychic change all the time. Many material signs, such as raps, which were once common, are now rare. When the door is opened, the knocks cease. The tendency is away from physical signs and towards more subtle and spiritual ones, automatic writings, and the like. Possibly the physical signs may cease altogether and remain as a wonderful incredible legend, like those of the days of the Apostles. We move slowly towards some definite goal, but none of us can clearly see what that goal may be. How little Christ could have foreseen the developments of Christianity! If He had visioned their whole

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panorama, the bitterness, the bloodshed, the futility, it would surely have caused Him greater pain than anything that He endured in Gethsemane. The gentle Jesus contemplating the Inquisition! Could there be a wider contrast than that!

No, we do not clearly see our goal. But we can see enough to assure ourselves that it will be the greatest upward movement of human thought and knowledge ever experienced, so that it will mark the definite end of the Dark Ages. But when? All the omens say soon. And yet when one reflects that "those of Cæsar's household" were Christians about the year 50, and that it did not reach Cæsar himself till 327, it makes one less optimistic.

I have had little time for literary recreation since I have been here, and my reading has necessarily been largely psychic, but it amused me to read with care the two novels which have been the largest sellers and therefore the most popular with the American public. These are *Main Street* and *If Winter Comes*. I think that the fact reflects great credit upon the judgment of the Americans, for both of them are fine books, honest, conscientious, and artistic. *Main Street* is difficult reading. I fancy many a pedestrian, like myself, has stuck half-way down the leading thoroughfare of Gopher Town. But none the less it has embalmed for ever a little Middle-Western township, the exact image and type of ten thousand others in the great cornlands. If the book is ever dull, it is because the town and the people are dull when reproduced with such exact detail. It is a wonderful, faithful picture, like the careful, realistic stippling of some old Dutch

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artist where every loop of lace in every collar must needs be outlined. *If Winter Comes* is very different, for though it incidentally touches on the humours of an English Gopher Town, it concerns itself less with externals and more with the spiritual development of Mark Sabre, the saint who never dreamed that he was a saint, for he was too saintly ever to fancy such a thing. The book rises to great heights, and is wonderfully English in atmosphere and sentiment, which makes its complete acceptance by Americans the more pleasing. There is one passage, the death of the old woman, Mrs. Perch, which is hardly to be matched in modern literature, and is the more moving to me because I believe that it is psychically true. A wonderful uplifting book, taking one back with poignant reality through all that we have gone through in these years of fear and effort.

It was about this time, after our return to New York, that we were brought into contact with an extremely interesting psychic group in Brooklyn. They consisted of two professional gentlemen of the highest standing, whom I will call Mr. Brady and Mr. Soames, for in this case, and this case only, I have found it necessary to use a pseudonym. Mr. Soames has a young and charming wife, who has suddenly developed strong mediumistic qualities which I was asked to observe. We sat in a dim light, the husband taking a rapid record of all that passed, so that I have a verbatim account before me as I write. The lady falls into a semi-trance and talks slowly in a deep level voice, the intonation never varying. As she spoke I observed that her hand moved as if she would have

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written the word automatically if her tongue had not uttered it. It was a curious scene, the dim light, the wind and rain beating on the window, our silent figures half seen in the gloom, and then that deep steady voice pouring out a long exhortation, absolutely foreign to the lady's power or knowledge.

The address was most academic and professional, abounding with long technical words which the medium found the greatest possible difficulty in pronouncing. It came clearly from an American spiritualist or psychic student of very high standing, and as we had been talking of Hyslop at dinner, we naturally concluded that it was he. When, therefore, Mr. Soames wrote James, we were prepared for the second name, Hyslop, to follow. He then wrote, "No, I am not James Hyslop, but James," so that it seemed that we were in contact with the famous Harvard psychologist. James spoke with great knowledge, and some scorn, of the present state of psychic research in America. "They are getting left entirely behind. We want 'up-to-the-minute men,'" he said. Then he lectured me very gravely as to my methods.

"Through no fault of yours those who come to your lectures, hearing for the first time a lecture on spiritism, find it difficult to relatively place and reconstruct it when they wish to talk it over afterwards. They need more tutoring. How is this to be done? I advise tracts, immediately preceding and following your visits to cities, embodying all details in precise statements. They must be compiled partially if not wholly by you in order to fan into fire the small flame you may have started in each individual. It

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is worth the extra labour which it will cause you, and it will become second nature to you to incorporate this work into your lectures. My dear sir, I beseech you before you return to send to these cities literature which will satisfy the cravings which you have brought to the surface, cravings which some had no idea they possessed, but which are now gnawing to be fed."

So it went on, the deep, steady voice, with one long sermon of good advice as to my tactics, sometimes impracticable, perhaps, but always measured and reasoned. I appeal to any reasonable mind whether such messages are more likely to come from a young married woman with no pretensions to any particular diction, or from the entity who actually claimed to send them. The Professor ended by imploring me to remain in the country, as a crisis was approaching and my presence might be of use. "Conditions are turning to the cause for which you have been working so long. They are just developing in a steady, onward glow. They should be directed and piloted, yet who will be the pilot when you have passed overseas? I have given the matter serious consideration, as has Dr. Hyslop. We have consulted together. I ask you, I beg you to give this most serious consideration. Will you desert when no sails are set for the storm?" It was a long and moving appeal, but what can I do with all tickets taken and my family waiting? Besides, I shall find plenty to do for the cause in England.

One very evidential touch occurred. I had, as narrated, met Colonel West of the United States Army in Chicago, and found him one of the elect, with every mark of a leader. I therefore asked the Pro-

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fessor whether he might not act as pilot. "Do you know him?" I asked. The answer was: "I know a Colonel West of tall stature—I do not mean to be unkind—of beef-like appearance but not unpleasantly so." That is a good rough description of Colonel West, who was quite unknown to the lady. Surely this was a very excellent test. There followed another test which I should like checked by some reader of these lines. I knew that James in his lifetime had sat with Voss, the farmer medium at Concord. I therefore asked about him. The answer was, "Do you mean the fellow who used to get in such peculiar positions and amuse all by his queer stories and grimaces?" "I refer," said I, "to Mr. Voss of Concord." "Yes, I am referring to the same man. He made terrible faces and contorted himself into positions which convulsed us all." I should be glad if any one who knows Mr. Voss would tell me if this is evidential.

The whole séance was most striking, and I will tell a little later how I again came into contact with this remarkable group.

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CHAPTER XIII

The American Magicians—My Little Joke—Letter to Houdini—Press Comments—Practical Religion—Edgar Allan Poe—The Bronx Gardens—Copper Bird—The Convict Once Again.

On June 2nd we were the guests of honour of the American Club of Magicians, which numbers a thousand members, including all the amateur and professional conjurers. It struck me that it would be very amusing if I could mystify the mystifiers, so I asked if I also might be permitted to do one out of the many performances which were to follow the dinner. It seemed a bold request to make in such company, but I was pretty sure of my ground, though it would have been awkward had I failed to make good. I explained with becoming gravity when my turn came to speak that there was nothing occult in what I would show, that it was psychic only as all human products are ultimately psychic, and that if it was preternatural it was only in the sense that it was not nature as we now could observe it. I added that such results depended upon a mixture of imagination on one side and power of materialisation upon the other, and I remarked that if the originals were shown instead of the presentment a very serious danger would threaten the company. Having thus worked up a fitting atmosphere and glamour, I had the whole select audience, men and women, on tiptoe of expectation. Now

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to explain my plan. Mr. Watterson Rothacker, of Chicago, was filming my *Lost World,* and an artist of remarkable powers, Mr. O'Brien, had for two years been busy making moving studies of the prehistoric beasts who play a part in that work though how he got them I cannot even now reveal. These studies were in New York, so that with the very efficient help of Mr. Wainwright, a colleague of Mr. Rothacker, I had only to set up the cinema apparatus in the banquet-room. A dead and eerie silence fell as the company saw these horrible creatures clawing and biting and fondling in the primeval slime. One saw their jaws champing and their terrible eyes gleaming. I am sure that no one who was there will ever forget it. Of course I refused to give any explanation afterwards and I left them, as I had intended, utterly mystified. Nothing could have been more completely successful.

Apart from my effort it was a wonderful evening, and especially Mr. Houdini gave a perfectly amazing performance, in which having been packed into a bag, and the bag into a trunk, corded up and locked, he was out again after only a few seconds' concealment in a tent, while in his place his wife was found, equally bound, bagged, and boxed, with my dress-coat on which I had put upon him before I tied his hands behind him. Houdini is the greatest conjurer in the world and this is his greatest trick. I may add that Houdini is not one of those shallow men who imagine they can explain away spiritual phenomena as parlour tricks, but that he retains an open—and ever, I think, a more receptive—mind towards mysteries which are beyond his art. He understands, I hope, that to get

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truth in the matter you have not to sit as a Sanhedrim of Judgment, like the Circle of Conjurers in London, since spiritual truth does not come as a culprit to a bar, but you must rather submit in a humble spirit to psychic conditions and so go forth, making most progress when on your knees.

The next day there was, as might be expected, a fine to-do in the New York Press. The *Times*, which was well represented, was particularly fair and graphic in its description. I am tempted to quote the article in full:

"DINOSAURS CAVORT IN FILM FOR DOYLE

"SPIRITIST MYSTIFIES WORLD-FAMED MAGICIANS WITH PICTURES OF PREHISTORIC BEASTS.
KEEPS ORIGIN A SECRET.

"MONSTERS OF OTHER AGES SHOWN, SOME FIGHTING, SOME AT PLAY, IN THEIR NATIVE JUNGLES.

"Motion pictures of extinct monsters at play and in battle were shown by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle last night at the dinner of the Society of American Magicians at the Hotel McAlpin.

"Monsters of several million years ago, mostly of the Dinosaur species, made love and killed each other in Sir Arthur's pictures. Prehistoric brutes that resembled rhinoceroses magnified many times, equipped with enormous horns that pointed forward like those of the unicorn, drove Dinosaurs away from feasts on one another. One monster, like a horned toad of mon-

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umental proportions, presented an impenetrable surface of armour plate to attacking reptiles and moved along in safety.

"Whether these pictures were intended by the famous author and champion of spiritism as a joke on the magicians or as a genuine picture like his photographs of fairies, was not revealed. Sir Arthur said they were 'psychic' and also that they were 'imaginative,' and announced in a firm tone, before they were shown, that he would submit to no questions on the subject of their origin.

"His monsters of the ancient world, or of the new world which he has discovered in the ether, were extraordinarily lifelike. If fakes, they were masterpieces. Hitherto, the famous visitor has not been inclined to play with his subject. Sir Arthur is the author of the *Lost World,* a novel in which a British scientist discovers in South America a plateau which has survived through geologic time and is still stocked with monsters which roamed the earth millions of years before man developed from the lower forms or was created.

"The motion pictures were presented without titles or comment of any kind, and the audience was left strictly to its own conclusions, whether the sober-faced Englishman was making merry with them or was lifting the veil from mysteries penetrated only by those of his school who know the secret of filming elves and ectoplasm and other things unknown to most minds.

"Sir Conan Doyle, who was introduced by Harry Houdini, President of the Club, said in his speech

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preceding the exhibition of his ethereal monsters that he had a friendly feeling for conjurers because they destroyed the great enemies of true spiritualists, those enemies being the fake mediums.

" 'On the other hand,' he said, 'when a conjurer does occasionally attack spiritualism as a whole, he deals in a subject which he does not understand.'

"Sir Arthur said that it had taken ten years and much laborious experiment to convince himself of the truth of Spiritualism, so that he had no right to be indignant with persons who were sceptics. On the other hand, he said, no man showed good judgment in regarding as foolish or easily deceived such great men as the late Sir William Crookes, Lord Rayleigh, and Alfred Russel Wallace, or men now living, such as Sir Oliver Lodge.

"Sir Arthur called the fake mediums 'human hyenas' and deplored the fact that Spiritualism was brought into disrepute by 'a fringe of camp-followers' who got into the newspapers.

"The author then asked permission of Mr. Houdini to give his strange exhibition. He gave no idea in advance as to its character, but said nothing to discredit the suggestion that he considered the coming exhibition to be genuine.

" 'If I brought here in real existence what I show in these pictures, it would be a great catastrophe,' he said.

" 'These pictures are not occult,' he continued. 'In the second place, this is psychic because everything that emanates from the human spirit or human brain is psychic. It is not supernatural. Nothing is. It is

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preternatural in the sense that it is not known to our ordinary senses.

"'It is the effect of the joining on the one hand of imagination and on the other hand of some power of materialisation. The imagination, I may say, comes from me—the materialising power from elsewhere.

"'There would be great danger if the originals were shown instead of the counterfeit, but what you will see is a living presentment.'

"After this mysterious utterance Sir Arthur said:

"'I would like to add, to save myself from getting up again, that, if permission is granted for me to show this, they will speak for themselves. I will answer no question regarding them either for the Press or the others present.'"

It would have been amusing to leave it at that until the appearance of the film partly cleared the matter up, but I reflected that I might cast a doubt upon the reality of my own psychic pictures, if, even for a joke, I were to put forward what might be regarded as a misrepresentation. Therefore on the morning after the banquet I wrote the following letter and handed it to the various Press Agencies:

"My dear Houdini,—

"My cinema interlude upon the occasion of the Magicians' dinner should, I think, be explained now that its purpose is fulfilled. That purpose was simply to provide a little mystification for those who have so often and so successfully mystified others. In presenting my moving Dinosaurs I had to walk warily

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in my speech so as to preserve the glamour, and yet say nothing which I could not justify as literally true. Thus I was emphatic that it was not occult, and only psychic in so far as all things human come from a man's spirit. It was preternatural in the sense that it was outside nature as we know it. All my other utterances were, as I think you will agree, within the actual facts.

"The Dinosaurs and other creatures have been constructed by pure cinema art of the highest kind, and are being used for the *Lost World* picture which represents prehistoric life upon a South American plateau. Having such material at hand, and being allowed by the courtesy of Mr. Watterson Rothacker to use it, I could not resist the temptation to surprise your associates and guests. I am sure that they will forgive me if for a few short hours I had them all guessing.

"And now, Mr. Chairman, confidence begets confidence, and I want to know how you got out of that trunk. Yours sincerely,

"ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE.

"*June* 3, 1922.
AMBASSADOR HOTEL."

So ended a very amusing episode.

One continually is made to realise what a glorious thing is this knowledge of ours. We had two examples of its workings in one day. A shop-girl on getting an order from my wife broke out at once as to the effect our teaching had upon her. "It makes everything happy again whenever I am down," said

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she. The same evening I met a man who stood high at the American bar. "It was two in the morning when I assured myself that this was true," said he, "and I walked as if on air until five and hardly knew where I was." He had been, like myself, a seasoned materialist and the sudden change was staggering. It is the religion of happiness, and that is what the race needs in these years of darkness. "Joy cometh with the morning," and that morning is surely dawning now. Fear must be dropped out of religion. Love and fear do not go together. The father who is really feared is not really loved. We may fear ourselves and our weaknesses, but love God who will help us like a wise elder Brother to overcome them.

Perhaps "love" is the wrong word. It is, I admit, hard to "love" a great central Creative force. To work in conscious harmony with it is the most one can do. But the Christ is different. There you have something intermediate, something human, personal, yet nearer the divine. That is why every religion has its Christ, just as each has its God, and they are essentially and spiritually the same Christ and the same God in such aspect as fits best that stage of human mental development. So I read the riddle, and if the world would read it so how quickly all religious shadows would vanish!

We have spent one Sunday afternoon hunting out the little cottage at Fordham near New York where Edgar Allan Poe spent the last years of his life. There is a doll's kitchen, a small sitting-room, with tea-things still upon the table, and the tiny bedroom where Virginia Poe passed away. His face looks

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at you from every wall, austere, coldly intellectual, cruel in its precise accuracy. He had every quality save humour, and of that there was not a trace. But he was surely the greatest originator of various story-types that ever lived. He was so sure of himself that he never troubled to work out a reef, but he just picked a nugget or two, and then turned away to prospect elsewhere. He was the real father of the detective story, of the buried-treasure story, of the Jules Verne semi-scientific story, of the purely morbid story, and of nearly every other sort that we now use. If every man who owed his inspiration to Poe was to contribute a tithe of his profits therefrom he would have a monument greater than the pyramids, and I for one would be among the builders. But his nature was sinister. A nature without humour is always sinister. But he had glamour to make amends—even as a youngster he had this glamour. Did ever schoolboy write such lines as those which speak of "the glory that was Greece, the splendour that was Rome"? They haunt the mind. There was a suggestion of the rarefied literary atmosphere in which he lived in the desk and the bookshelves, with a little written criticism in his exquisite script in which he accuses Coleridge of plagiarism from Schiller—with very complete proofs.

From Poe's cottage we made our way to the Bronx Zoölogical Gardens, but it was tropically hot, dreadfully crowded, and I at least was very weary. The boys, however, seemed to enjoy it all immensely and Billy was mounted by the keeper upon a huge turtle which was induced to move by holding an apple a few

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inches in front of its beak, and so carried her round the enclosure.

Both the chief keepers were English, and an American friend told me that it had been observed that Englishmen get on best with animals and birds when in captivity. They get on best with aboriginal races, also, and the more aboriginal the better they do it, as any one who has come into touch with the old Soudanese regiments and their officers would testify. It is the sophisticated native, who claims an equality which he does not really possess, who offers the difficult problem. Apropos of this it is comic to read some of the American papers upon the oppressed natives of India. They do not realise that there is a freedom of political speech in India which would probably land the American who used it in a gaol. Whether rightly or wrongly, the American police and magistrates have a very short way with Communists. To a European it looks rather like sitting on the safety-valve, but the general prosperity of the country is so great that there is to the superficial observer no real body of discontent. Jack London seemed to foresee something more serious in the future.

But this is a sad digression from the Bronx Zoölogical Gardens, where we shook hands with a sad-eyed, wistful chimpanzee who tried to put Malcolm's coat on and was very grateful to me on having his back scratched. It is well to draw attention to this place, for foreign visitors often imagine that the little place in the Central Park is the Zoo, whereas it is a mere annex. This is the real show, where there are five thousand different forms of life to be studied, includ-

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ing some, especially among the birds, which are not represented elsewhere. The whole splendid place, with its free admission to the public, makes one ashamed of our Gardens in London, though I quite believe that the Directors there do the best they can under the difficulties which beset them. A large view should be taken of the subject, the place should be looked upon as a valuable asset, both as an attraction to visitors and as a means for education. Therefore, it should be treated in a broad, generous way and a good section of Regent's Park should be added to it, so as to give more space for the animals, and more room for the circulation of crowds, with free admission to all. The New York keeper, who had formerly been at London, said that on a holiday it was pitiful to see the little children who were in the Zoo for hours, worn out with fatigue, and unable to see anything on account of the compression of the people.

There was one bird in the Bronx Gardens, the White-crested Touraco, from South Africa, which had a very rare attribute. Its under-wing feathers are richly red, and were analysed to find the secret of the colours. It was found that they were 7 per cent. metallic copper. The deduction from this would appear to be that the creature had come from a region where the copper deposits were so rich that they impregnated everything the bird ate. It struck me as a novel and ingenious commencement of a boy's treasure-hunt story, if some enterprising youth would follow up the clue.

In a previous chapter I have alluded to a man, Edward Morrell, who had been tortured in San Quentin

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Prison, California, and through his tortures had gained certain psychic powers recorded by Jack London in his *Jacket* or *Star-Rover*. I have seen more of him now, and he is certainly one of the strangest personalities I have encountered in this country. He is snappy, with a click to all he does or says, like the cock of a pistol; but behind it all is a well-poised brain and a steady purpose, as his clear eyes and firm mouth can testify. Picture him the clean-cut, deadly-earnest man, leaning forward eagerly in his chair, and then read this, our dialogue.

"How came you into prison, Mr. Morrell?"

"It was really a small civil war, sir—a feud between squatters and a great railroad company who tried to do them out of their holdings. They had the whole force of the State, police, judges, and everything, at their back. They could do what they liked. We had only our guns. So they proclaimed us bandits and treated us as such when taken. If they killed us, no more said; if we killed them, it was sure murder."

"So they jailed you."

"Yes, sir, and I was little more than a boy. And I could not stand for the way they treated us, and so I got it the harder. At last they had me in the black cell, and there were five years of my life during which I could only see my own hand at certain hours in the day when a ray of light came through a hole. Five years, sir, and I never left that cell except the days I was tortured. My beard was over my chest in front and my hair was down to my waist behind."

"Tell me about the tortures."

"It was mostly the jacket. They lace it up until

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they squeeze the very heart out of you. And there I came upon this way of getting your soul out of your body. It was self-hypnotising, I suppose. I could not have done it if I had not been so weak, anyhow. I used to lie there and watch a light over the door. Then I felt it coming on. I cursed the keepers to make them strap tighter. I knew it was either death that time, or else I would get my result. I got their goat. It didn't take much to do that. There were three of them with their knees in the small of my back pulling on a half-inch rope. Then they left me. And it came just as I expected. I felt it easing till it was no more than a great-coat, and then it vanished, and I was out of the body. I had forty-eight hours on end, and I laughed when they came for me, and I got forty-eight more hours for that. But it was worth it."

"What were these visions you saw?"

"They were bits out of my own previous lives."

"How do you know they were not bits out of your readings?"

"You've read them, have you not?"

"Yes."

"Well, how could they be things I had read when I was only a boy that knew nothing and had read nothing when I was jailed?"

It was true. I recalled the wonderful series of pictures of the life of a primitive man, of a Norse pirate, of a mediæval knight, of all sorts of people which are given in Jack London's *Jacket* and which I recognised when I read them as being a different, a finer, and a more literary style than his own.

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"Yes, sir, I dictated them to Jack with a stenographer taking every word. I did 10,000 words at a stretch once. It was all branded in my brain. Every word was as I had it. I was like a man possessed. When I got waving a stick, Jack cried 'Stop! You put fear into me!'"

"Then you think that under self-hypnotism you went back along the line of your vanished lives, and that when these brutes thought that you were under torture you were really living the outstanding scenes over again?"

"Yes, sir, that was so."

"If the prisoners were misused, as you say, how came it that there were no inquests and inquiries?"

"There was at that time no law for prisoners. It was just a hole in the hill-side and no more said."

It sounds a pretty grim story, but of course it is all altered now—thanks largely to Morrell's own work. When, through the humanity of a good reforming Governor, he got his release, he devoted himself to this work, and he still travels the country with a van lecturing on the matter. San Quentin is reformed, but he holds that the greater number of institutions are very backward. They vary of course with the culture of the State, but one would think that a matter of such importance should be taken away from local fads or politics and made part of the general Federal law of the land. I have at different times inspected both the Tombs and Sing-Sing, so I know at first hand something of American prison conditions. In some cases they seem to err upon the side of severity and

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in others of extreme indulgence, so that the whole system is without method or principle. It will be a fine thing, however, if Morrell should from his own terrible experience be able to bring relief to other sufferers.

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CHAPTER XIV

Atlantic *v.* Pacific—Rest at Atlantic City—Conjurers and Mediums—A Curious Psychic—Sir Philip Gibbs—A Haul of Fishes—Houdini's Experiences—Colonel Firth and Radio—Psychic Drawings.

The weather was getting very hot in New York, with that peculiar brew of damp heat for which the island city is notorious, so we were glad to change our quarters, now that the work was done, to Atlantic City, the celebrated New Jersey watering-place. Our Ambassador Hotel had a daughter there, even larger and more wonderful than her mother, so that my only fear was that our party would become enervated from the luxury we were enjoying. It is difficult to describe Atlantic City, for we have nothing in England which is at all like it. The whole town is built upon a great sandbank with the Atlantic in front and the swamps of the Delaware River behind. It is so little above sea-level that it would be no surprise to me if a tidal wave some day were to wash it clean. Meanwhile, it is quite the liveliest place which we have found in our extended travels, and can only be compared to Manly near Sydney for the excellence of the surf-bathing. The Atlantic roller has not the glorious slow heave and roar of its Pacific brother, but it is big enough to give you a merry romp if you care to go out to play. The sea has always been a nurse to me, and I have spent two full years of my life

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actually on her bosom, so I was glad to be in her arms once again. To lie floating on a blue ocean and look up to a blue sky is the nearest approach to detachment from earth that normal life can give.

Though so pleasant, it is not a very safe beach, for there is a queer tricky goblin of a current which comes and goes, suddenly catching at your legs and sweeping you seaward. Several were drowned while we were there, and Houdini, who is one of the finest swimmers in the world, told me that he had to fight for his life on one occasion. They keep a patrol, however, of very competent men upon the beach, who are stripped and ready from morning to night. The constant exposure has burned most of them quite as red as an Indian and suggests the curious reflection that if we lived under quite natural conditions no such thing as the white race would be known. I am convinced that the Maoris, for example, are simply sunburned whites.

I had come to Atlantic City for a much-needed rest, but it was essential that I should get my travel impressions down while they were fresh, and up to this point many of them were mere jottings in a notebook. This work kept me busy for several hours a day. Still, what with my daily swim, and what with rides up and down the Boardwalk in the double bath-chairs, propelled by a one-negro-power human engine, I had a very restful time, and all of us found our fun in our various ways. Several friends came down to say good-bye to us, and so lightened the days.

The children, like children of all nations, are in-

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tensely patriotic, though they keep their feelings to themselves save when they are exasperated by some attack or comparison. Billy always carries a small Union Jack, drawn by herself in pencil, in her pocket, and when they saw the flag on the north bank of Niagara River, they were all in the mood to throw themselves down on their knees. Yet they honestly love the Americans—"The grown-ups, anyhow. I am not so sure about the children," says Denis. "If I wasn't British I should certainly want to be American," says Malcolm. Billy, as usual, says nothing, but bottles up compressed emotions. She got several splinters of wood into her foot on the Boardwalk in Atlantic City. A chemist extracted them with a forceps. "You are very brave. You did nothing but grin," said a kind-hearted bystander. "Oh, I am English," chirped Billy. That is the good side of patriotism when it helps one to live at one's best, but alas for the evil side when it takes the form of brag and bounce and the disregard of other people's feelings! After all, the War proved that there was a very high standard of valour and self-sacrifice in every nation on whatever side they fought.

There is a deep, silent sort of love of country which surprises one in some people, for one would never suspect its intensity. I can remember that in 1894 when I was in the States the British were having a poor time there, politics and the Lord Dunraven yacht-race combining to make them unpopular. I noticed on board the boat coming back a dark, silent man with a heavy moustache—a sort of cavalry officer type—as free from apparent emotion as a man could be. When

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we arrived at Liverpool it was midwinter, pouring rain, and the quay all slush. I was about to walk down the gangway when some one brushed violently past me, the heavy dragoon man blundered down the gangway, and I saw him throw himself upon his face on the pier and press his lips to the muddy ground. Much inner pain must have been endured before such a man was in such a plight as that.

I do not as a rule speak of our domestic séances, where my wife writes, because they refer usually to family matters, since it is our own people who manifest through her. We ask for no tests, but take what comes in a spirit of humble gratitude, with the result that most convincing tests come through. On one occasion, for example, when I was receiving a message from Hornung, my brother-in-law, he mentioned that a man who had played good cricket with me in old days had just come through. I asked for the name —which is always a severe test. A jumble of letters came in answer, ending up with CINI. "This is nonsense," said I. "If it is a name at all, it is an Italian one, and there never was an Italian, so far as I know, who played good-class cricket." That evening we learned for the first time that Paravicini had died. I must confess that I cannot be sure that I ever actually played with him, but we played in the same sort of teams, and it is quite likely that I did. At any rate, the test is far beyond coincidence.

The reason, however, why I refer to my wife's remarkable power, which only came by slow development, is that my friend, Mr. Houdini, the greatest of magicians, sat with us one afternoon, and received a

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fifteen-page letter from his mother which made him very grave and thoughtful, though he is a most difficult man to convince. It was a sudden inspiration of mine to ask him up to our room and see if we could get any evidence or consolation for him. It was a singular scene, my wife with her hand flying wildly, beating the table while she scribbled at a furious rate, I sitting opposite and tearing sheet after sheet from the block as it was filled up, and tossing each across to Houdini, while he sat silent, looking grimmer and paler every moment. We asked him to think a question in silence, and a correct answer came instantly through my wife's hand. But then occurred the most marvellous thing of all. Houdini sat playing with the pencil when his own hand was suddenly moved and he wrote the word Powell. Now, Dr. Ellis Powell, my dear fighting partner in Spiritualism, had just died in England—worn out, I expect, by his own exertions, for he was a desperately hard worker in the cause. I was the man he was most likely to signal to, and here was his name coming through the hand of Houdini. "Truly Saul is among the Prophets," said I. There was a sequel to this incident upon the same evening as I shall tell presently, which made it even more convincing.

Talking of the views of conjurers, which are generally not only unintelligent, but quite spiteful about phenomena, as though they regarded them as some form of illicit competition, it interested me to find that Mr. Howard Thurston, who is, next to Houdini, the chief magician in America, has shown great patience and acumen in investigating mediums. He has

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naturally found fraud, but he has also admitted that he has several times encountered real psychic gifts which are in a different category to tricks. By this admission he has placed himself in an enlightened band who number several of the greatest magicians of the past. Thurston had the independence of mind to give evidence in favour of Eusapia Palladino at the time when that great physical medium, with only the dregs of her powers remaining, visited the United States, and excited contemptuous derision by her habit of openly pushing or tilting the table. Whether this is done on purpose or under the influence of a control there is no question about the fact and it is done so openly that it is more like a joke than a real attempt at deception. Mr. Thurston had the sense to see that deeper things lay beyond. "I caught her almost at once," he wrote, "lifting the table, a small one, by hand pressure and toe leverage. I did not stop the séance with the discovery of this trick. I did not say anything about it. The séance proceeded. The woman produced materialisations of hands, faces, and figures, in the dim light of a lamp, while I had her under perfect observation, with full opportunity to detect any possible tricks or device." Dr. Carrington gave similar evidence in favour of Eusapia, but Professor Münsterberg and others bore her down so that she left America under a cloud, which was certainly largely of her own making. Thurston sat also several times with Miss Besinnet, and has said after one of her sittings, "One could travel round the world and not duplicate this experience." When conjurers sneer at psychic phenomena they should remember that many of

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their great predecessors, Houdini, Harry Kellar, Bellachini, Dr. Jacob Hartmann and others have admitted that the things of the spirit are on an entirely different level to their own art, which is so excellent in its place, and so absurd when it contradicts the serious studies of serious men. It is natural, however, that conjurers in America should be strongly prejudiced, for it is a fact that the villainous false mediums actually come to them and ask for instruction in their tricks so that they may impress and swindle their clients.

I had a long talk one morning with a Mr. Weintrob, a well-known citizen of the town. He has had some very curious manifestations of psychic power. In the year 1907 he was lying in his bath and had just turned on the water when his soul left his body and he had an amazing series of adventures, which ended, after many journeyings, in his being aware that he was within some foreign palace, and seeing there two pictures, one of which represented a ship labouring in a heavy sea and the other a combat of giants. It was explained to him that the real meaning of these pictures was the combat of the spiritual against the material. When he woke from his vision, the bath was not yet quite full, so that the whole occupied less than half a minute.

Seven years later, in the spring of 1914, he was sent by the American Government as a delegate on agricultural matters to the Balkan States. While there, he had a long interview with Carmen Sylva, Queen of Roumania, in her palace. To her he related his vision, upon which she led him into an adjacent room and showed him the two pictures he had seen in his

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dream, with the remark that the artist had told her that they were meant as allegories as described.

Early in June 1914 Weintrob had another vision, in which he saw the war, great bodies of men struggling with each other, and an assurance that it would all prove in the end to be for the ultimate spiritual benefit of mankind when the full message was learned.

These visions appeared to be timed for every seven years, as in 1921, he had another very long and clear one, which I will put down in detail in case the future should confirm it. He first saw a number of women and children in apparent agony, with long red worms about a foot in length upon the ground round them. The word "Pestilence" in luminous letters appeared before him. Then he saw a great procession of women all dressed in white with blue crosses upon their sleeves. Above them was the figure of Saint Paul, and above him again the number 9. This procession moved across, distributing what appeared to be spiritual messages among the poor and wretched of earth. "The order of the Blue Cross" was the name conveyed to his mind. It was a curious vivid apocalyptic vision, though I agree that it needs no prohpecy to foresee a pestilence as probable after the horrors of the Russian famine. We are all one body, and you cannot have a gangrenous limb and expect that the other organs will remain sound.

Mr. Weintrob is less like a visionary than any man you could conceive, short, stocky, bull-faced, but with kindly human eyes.

I beguiled my time at Atlantic City, though rather

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sadly, by reading Gibb's *More That Must be Told.* It is not cheering reading, for he has a quick eye for the seamy side, but he has also a reaching-out for better things, which is the sign of a fine soul. But I wish he would either leave Spiritualism alone or else learn the first thing about it, for his only allusion to it is an unworthy sneer. Sir Philip's words are really worth quoting as an example of the strange ignorance which even so intelligent a man can show of this great modern movement, a movement which has deeply moved a saint like Wilberforce or a scientist like Crookes or Lodge. He calls it "reaching out into a spirit-world by means of incantations, spells, and wizardries." It may interest my friend Sir Philip to hear that I have been in touch with this movement since 1886, and that in 36 years I have never heard an incantation, I have never learned a spell, and the only wizards I have met bear a close family resemblance to St. Paul and the Apostles. But it is clear that Sir Philip is confusing a movement which bears no close resemblance to any save that of the early Christians, with the abracadabra pentagram business of the Middle Ages to which he directly alludes. It is a pity to find a man who has, above most men, a keen spiritual side going out of his way to talk so wildly of a subject of which he knows nothing. Is it not a clear proposition that the first need of the age is to *prove* that there is a life after death, the basis of all religion, and that we are the only people who undertake to do so? We need to be more direct and practical and objective in our treatment of religious subjects, for we have had enough of those vague dogmatic faiths which have

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broken down so completely in the actual test of life, and have ended in this horrible tragedy which has left ten million young men dead upon the ground.

A busy man has little time for literary criticisms, but I have often thought how agreeable a recreation it would be for the man who has the literary instinct to browse amongst the neglected books of the past and to endeavour to resuscitate some of those which have perished untimely—often through the accident of the time when they were born. Days of national unrest are fatal to the recognition of good literary work. Unfortunately the man with literary instinct is usually the man who is himself a creator and has therefore no time for criticism. How easily a great critic may become a great writer was shown when Watts-Dunton, the greatest critic of his generation, suddenly in his mature age produced *Aylwin*, which is one of the best novels of his time. I fancy much good work was wasted during the war. One novel I remember, called *A Born Fool*, written by a soldier in the Gordon Highlanders, who may for all I know be now under the sod, seemed to me to narrowly miss real greatness. If I were to mention another novel, which bore the stigmata of greatness—great in style and command of English—it would be to add laurel leaves where there is hardly room for more. I mean *The Revels of Orsera*, by Sir Ronald Ross, who has already placed the human race under such obligations. Ross also wrote a literary one-act play, called, if I remember right, *Evil*, which if it had been by the Slavonic Rossovitch or the Scandinavian Rossen would have been hailed as a work of genius. However, all this

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has nothing to do with Atlantic City or our Adventure in America.

One of the favourite amusements of Atlantic City when you are not moving along the Boardwalk in the huge invalid-chairs—I thought at first that it was a population of convalescents—is to go down to Young's million-dollar pier and see the fish-net being drawn. This occurs twice a day and is certainly well worth seeing. By some device which is beyond me the fish are led up through a series of nets until they finally assemble in a *cul-de-sac,* which is duly brought to the surface. They are very numerous and very varied—indeed, it is rather a horrible sight, that mass of pullulating life, flapping and beating in its vain struggle against extinction. Crabs predominate, red crabs by the hundred, and big king crabs, like huge horny tadpoles, never seen by me before save in museums and in palæozoic rocks. Then there are the fish proper, queer blowfish which puff themselves into spiky balls, and gasp through their parrot beaks, gurnards and char and hake, and comely sea-trouts, and big, stupid, heavy-eyed gropers, the fish which the diver fears more than he does the shark. Presiding over the whole scene, megaphone in hand, was Mr. Young himself, he who built the million-dollar pier, a democratic figure as he shouted small jokes to the crowd, and gave directions for the emptying of the net. It is certainly a sight to see once, though it leaves a repugnant feeling in the mind.

A Britisher passing through America is not, as a rule, impressed by hustle to the extent that Americans think. As a rule there is more snap and ginger in a

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London transaction than in an American one. There are, however, notable exceptions. When I saw on the Saturday the huge empty hall of the pier and was told that on the following Wednesday it was to be opened as a great railway exhibition, with engines which weighed a hundred tons and machinery all actually running, I was sceptical. But it all materialised according to schedule. On the Wednesday it was one long line of exhibits, and humming from end to end with turning wheels and sliding pistons. We were shown over by the Committee and were deeply impressed. Everything conceivable connected with railways was there, from the huge transcontinental engine already mentioned to the latest burglar-proof catch for a truck or the best cloth for lining a carriage. My head buzzed to match the wheels before I got out, for I have no brains for mechanics and it was a strain to try to understand it all. The most ingenious thing I saw was a little extra engine called a "booster," running by its own electric power, which has its own wheels, and is slipped under the big ordinary engine so as to give it extra power. Some genius had observed that there was unoccupied space under the engine and had thought that it could be filled like this. The "booster" is, I believe, being actually tried on the London and North-Western Railway, and it may prove one of those clever helps which come to us from the land of active brains.

Whilst we were at Atlantic City we had a visit from the Brooklyn friends to whom I have already alluded. If I suppress their names it is a practical proof that the days of prejudice and persecution are not yet

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passed. On the same day as the Houdini sitting already narrated we had a prolonged sitting at the hotel, in which once more the most solemn directions came to me, professing to be from the group of spirits who are the generals of the psychic cause upon the other side. The names of James, Hyslop, and Myers came through, and they professed to speak for a larger body. Nothing could possibly have been more measured and more lofty than their general review of the situation and their advice as to the best way of proceeding, though they did not seem to realise that I had no claims to be an autocrat, and that if I endeavoured to become one I should be unlikely to find others to admit such a position. I think that they lose touch with worldly realities when they are viewed from beyond. But the whole séance was most impressive and inspiring. At one period a spirit, who was sensed by the medium as a man, broke in with the words, "I must apologise if I broke in so abruptly this afternoon." I had not told the medium the remarkable way in which we had got the name of Powell through Houdini's hand, so that, although we failed to get the name, the incident seemed very suggestive.

I had an interesting talk to-day with Houdini about his wonderful powers. Very naturally he gives nothing away, for a trick explained loses its virtue. I am quite sure that if the Davenport Brothers had done their performance as if it were a conjuring trick, and never told the honest and unpopular truth that it was of psychic origin, they would have amassed a comfortable fortune and been far wiser from a worldly point of view—which, after all, is not the highest wis-

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dom when the end of the story comes to be told. Houdini has done marvellous leaps from high buildings, and on one occasion a spring from one aeroplane to another in mid-air. He is sustained, he says, by his perfect confidence that he really can do it. "It all comes as easy as stepping off a log." But when he stands above some awful place from which he will spring he has to wait patiently—sometimes for many minutes—until something within him tells him that the time is ripe for his effort. This, he says, is universal among all men who do such stunts. If you don't wait for that moment you "have about as much chance as a celluloid dog in Hell." He was tempted once to trust himself instead of his unseen guides, and then he nearly broke his neck. "You stand there," he said, "swallowing the yellow stuff that every man has in him. Then at last you hear the voice, and you jump." It may be the subconscious self which assures itself that all is well. It may be spiritual, but the fact is worth recording. If you jump into water from a great height, even a floating match may cause a wound.

I had a long talk in New York with Colonel Firth, who is one of the pioneers of radio work, which is evidently going to be a great factor in the future life of the world. He explained to me that this system of broadcasting, by which any one who has an efficient receiver can get all the concerts, operas, sermons, or lectures which are sent out, is going to make an enormous difference to the lonely farmers who here and in Canada form so considerable a part of the population. With no wires and no expense save the initial receiver they can keep in direct touch with all that

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is going on, and also receive market prices, weather reports, and everything else that is needful. Colonel Firth was about to present a set to every lighthouse keeper along the coast, and I only hope that our Government will follow suit. He informed me that though the public radio craze has not yet broken out with us to the same extent we are none the less in a technical sense very well up in radio work, the best valves which intensify sound coming from England. How far the sound is magnified is determined by the number of these valves, and Colonel Firth mentioned as a fact within his knowledge that the British fitted up a receiver so delicate that from the coast they could get all the little German trench installations which were only meant to carry a mile or so. The British also had a system of range-finders by which they could determine the exact position of any German submarine if the submarine ventured to send out a wireless. Many of their boats were detected and destroyed by this method.

Mr. Marconi is in New York at present with his yacht, the *Electra*. He tells how in the Mediterranean last year he intercepted wireless waves of a length of 30,000 metres, which is far above any power in this world. He was ready in a half-serious way to discuss their origin as from Mars. I ventured to write to him and to point out that as we had ample evidence of disembodied life, and as it seems to exist in the ether, which is the basis of wireless, it would surely be equally possible that these messages were experimental attempts from our own agencies which have passed over than that they are from another planet. I have

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a hope that the near future may prove whether I am not right.

Our last days in New York were clouded by the news of the death of an old friend, fellow-cricketer and brother-author, Hesketh Prichard, as fine a specimen of British manhood as our island could show. His over-work in the war and the illness which he contracted at the front brought about his premature end. Hex, as all his friends used to call him, was the most gentle and lovable of giants, but his great hobby had been the use of the rifle, which had caused him to embark on many heavy game excursions. At the beginning of the war we were quite overcrowded by the German snipers, who were all trained shots furnished with special rifles and telescopic sights. Prichard found an opening for his special knowledge, and, going to France, he instituted the first sniping school. He had most elaborate methods and dodges, and, in the early days, before his pupils were efficient, if any German sniper was reported as very formidable and invulnerable, he would go off and deal with him himself. The result of his labours was that we established supremacy in sniping along the whole line. When he was given the D.S.O. it was said of him that he had probably done more damage than any other Englishman in the field. Six feet four, with the simple spirit of a schoolboy and the courage of a lion, a grand bowler, a fine writer, a great patriot, it was a loss to England when he passed on.

I have been to several exhibitions of psychic drawings since I have been in this country, the latest being a series of pencil sketches by Mrs. Field, of Chi-

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cago. I have also in England examined many of these drawings through the hands of various mediums, most of whom aver that under normal conditions they are unable to draw a line. Surely this phenomenon must arrest the attention of the most conservative and prejudiced of our opponents. Here, in the case of Mrs. Field, is a middle-class woman with no particular claims to erudition or culture. She finds that at certain times she has an irresistible impulse to draw strange pictures which are clearly of deep symbolic meaning, and which include Eastern dresses, Egyptian symbols, the sacred fish, the etheric body, and all sorts of things which never come within the range of her ordinary knowledge. How stupid it is to ignore such patent phenomena as those. One may well argue that they are subconscious, that they are the work of a secondary personality, or in any other way camouflage our ignorance—but even so they are objective things and therefore of more value than all the fine-drawn theories of the psychologists. The only argument that I know for their spirit-origin is that the drawings are not infrequently accompanied by automatic writing which makes this claim. In a recent case a Brooklyn man, seized suddenly with the picture-drawing power, asked whence it proceeded. The written answer was, "I am Joseph Sassemy" (I may be inaccurate in the name). On referring to books he found that the man was really a Viennese artist of distinction who died a generation or so back. There have been many such cases, and the evidence is really very strong, as would be at once recognised if this subject were not surrounded by so many prejudices and prejudgments.

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CHAPTER XV

An Appreciative Letter—Actual Results—Captain David—White Star *versus* P. & O.—Bronx—The Queen's Hall—Finis.

We were due to leave America by the *Adriatic* on June 24th, and our time was drawing to a close. It has been a glorious experience and a wonderful privilege that I should be chosen to bring back a fuller recognition of this great revelation to the very land which God had chosen for its original reception. It may seem that I have exaggerated the success of my efforts, and there are always opponents who are ready to decry our results, so I beg that the reader will not set it down as self-glorification if I include the following letter:

AMBASSADOR HOTEL,
PARK AVE. AND 51ST ST.,
NEW YORK CITY.

DEAR SIR ARTHUR,—

Before your departure from America permit me to congratulate you upon the results of your lecture tour, which was a pronounced success from every point of view.

The thousands of Americans who crowded our largest halls bore eloquent testimony to the esteem in which you are held as an exponent of Spiritualism, and the satisfaction they expressed as they left the halls furnished concrete proof of your effectiveness in

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presenting your theme. Your voice reached distinctly to all parts of the spacious auditoriums; your platform presence was magnetic, and your delivery forceful and convincing.

In speaking seven times on the same subject in the largest halls in Greater New York within the brief period of less than one month, you broke all lecture records, and even eclipsed records of the greatest living musicians. Faithfully yours,

(*Signed*) LEE KEEDICK.

There is no need why I should hesitate to give some actual material results. Our expenses were naturally very heavy, since we were a party of seven travelling over long distances and living in hotels which were necessarily central and therefore expensive. Lecture-halls were also exceedingly expensive. None the less I cleared in two months of actual work all these heavy expenses, and I shall be disappointed if I do not find at the end that I have a clear £1,500 which I can devote to the various spiritualist bodies in England, or to the help of those individuals who are giving valuable service, with little remuneration, to our cause. Therefore even in the lower material sense the trip has been a great success.

It was a great pleasure to us to find that the Captain of the *Adriatic* was David, formerly Captain of the *Megantic*, in which we had returned in 1914 from Canada. Little did the poor man think, as we made that pleasant July voyage together, of what was immediately in store for him, and that he was about to be precipitated into a frightful war, in the course of

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which his vessel was twice blown to pieces under his feet. Even now, I think, we have not sufficiently expressed our gratitude to that glorious merchant navy which turned its hand so easily to war, and could not be cowed by anything which the most cruel enemy could devise. And the trawlers and the drifters and the sweepers—who can ever speak adequately of the men who manned them?

So the day of release came at last, and with many kind friends to see us off we went out to blue summer seas, and rest and peace and the great cleanliness of ocean air. The ocean and the desert are the two great spaces which man can never vulgarise and which renew the primitive forces within him. It was a glorious home voyage, and I returned after all our experiences a stronger man than I had left. I hold no special brief for the White Star Line—all that I have ever had or ever will have from them is on a business basis—but I cannot refrain from saying, with such authority as many voyages may confer, that nowhere is a better spirit and a kindlier atmosphere to be found than under that house-flag. Others may have the same splendid breed of captains and officers, but, alas! when it comes to management or the comfort of passengers, there may be a deep gulf. I suppose it comes from the absence of competition, but I cannot forget how we started on our Australian voyage with stale shop-eggs, and with undrinkable tea, or how in a ship which must continually convey children there were neither books nor games for the little ones. If some directors were to take one out-and-back cruise in a White Star liner under Captain David of the *Adriatic*

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or Captain Beadnell of the *Baltic*, they would learn a good deal which would be invaluable to their clients, who pay high rates and are badly served. Mr. Kipling wrote strongly upon the subject many years ago, and all that he said then still holds good.

Of our voyage itself it was but a row of golden days strung upon one unbroken line of peace and happiness until the blue waves of the Southern course turned to the slate-grey of the British waters, and once more the twinkling lights of poor tormented Ireland appeared above the sea-line. Twice I lectured upon psychic matters, once in each class, with excellent and appreciative audiences, who subscribed sixty pounds between them to sailors' charities as a visible sign of their kindly reception.

A diversion too was created by a five-foot king snake which had been given to the boys by the Bronx Zoo and was named after its place of birth. With a fond trust that others would view the matter as they did, the boys brought Bronx on deck the first day and played with him, on which an alarmed lady informed the purser that either the snake or she must go overboard. A compromise was at last effected by Bronx being removed in disgrace to the butchers' department, where he sulked for the rest of the voyage, only waking up once to eat a dead mouse which had been provided for him. I see a vista of terrible situations before we see the end of Bronx.' A less questionable novelty is a little crystal radio set, the copper wire of which we ran up to the yard-arm, and were able to actually take our own Morse messages without a receiver, though my own superficial knowledge gained

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as a volunteer flagwagger during the war was too slight to enable me to sift out the constant stream of dots and dashes which poured into my ears.

The one mischance of our adventures was at the very last moment. A great meeting of our people was going on at the Queen's Hall, and it was crowded to the doors, so that it was hoped both by us and them that we could mutually greet each other. A day from home I had seen that it could not be, and had radioed to that effect. But the telegram was never delivered owing to some want of organisation at the Queen's Hall. Therefore these dear people, 3,000 of them, went on making speeches and playing for time when the case was really impossible. It was not until one o'clock in the morning that our train came in.

We had been unable to keep an appointment with our friends, but next night there was fortunately a final meeting at the South Place Institute and there we were both able to attend. It was delightful to feel the warmth of the welcome, the whole audience standing up as we entered. There was an international gathering upon the platform. Dr. Warne and Mrs. Cadwalader of the United States, both of whom we had left in Chicago, being present, together with delegates to the Conference from France, Belgium, Holland, and Denmark, and a coloured lady from Columbus. It was a long programme—too long—but the best of feeling reigned throughout. As to my own remarks, at the risk of repetition, I append them as they appeared in the report in *Light:*

"Sir Arthur, addressing those present as 'Comrades and friends,' expressed his keen regret at not having

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been present at the meeting at Queen's Hall the previous night. He had tried hard to be there. No words could adequately describe the kindness he met throughout his American tour. And it came from foes as well as from friends. There was none of the nagging that was sometimes met with on this side. It was all fair and aboveboard. He found himself on quite friendly terms with his opponents. He felt that in America the Spiritualist movement had a great and immediate future before it. A prominent journalist said to him that Spiritualism had reached such a position that newspapers could no longer treat it with levity. He added that papers had to follow the public, and the public would not tolerate poking fun at it. That was the state of things they had to bring about in this country. (Hear, hear.) He had no doubt that if they went on presenting their case with dignity, what had happened on the other side of the Atlantic would also happen here.

"He left America feeling it was in the sunshine but in England there was a shadow. He referred to the enormous loss sustained by the passing of Dr. Ellis Powell. There was no doubt that his premature death was due to his efforts to prove to the world the truth it needed so badly. Another familiar face that he missed was that of their friend, Mr. Robert Yates.

"Another who was under a shadow was Mr. William Hope, one whom he had always borne in esteem. (Applause.) Having tested him again and again, he could say that the accusations of recent investigators had no bearing on his experience. Such fraud would

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in no way explain the results obtained. He could only speak from his own knowledge, and he could declare his utmost belief in the psychic powers of Mr. Hope. There were two things they must remember. First, they must not connive at fraud; and second, they must protect their mediums from injustice. (Loud applause.)

"When he went to America he had fears, for he knew what the dangers were. But he had exaggerated them. On the whole, comparing the two countries, he thought that in England we were a more material race than the Americans were. A danger he had feared was the Americans' keen sense of humour. Many of the truths of Spiritualism were homely, and the subject certainly did lend itself to cheap ridicule. But from the very start the American Press rose clean above it. The Press of New York treated the subject with dignity, and it set the key-note for the rest of the Press of America. Men in newspaper offices who wrote the scare headlines at first perpetrated such atrocities as 'Do Spooks Marry?' thinking it would amuse their public, but they soon found that the public would have none of it. He was surprised indeed to find that the American humour took an unexpected angle, and that was in seeing the ridiculous side of journalists, who knew nothing of the subject, trying to put in their places such eminent men of science as Sir William Crookes and Professor Lombroso.

"It was a cold fact that he (Sir Arthur) had broken every lecturing record in New York. (Applause.) He did not say this boastfully, as he was well aware

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it was the subject, not the man. The record, he was glad to say, had been previously held by Sir Oliver Lodge, so that psychic lecturers had shown that the public really wanted information on the subject. He had filled the great Carnegie Hall in New York six times, and Brooklyn once, a feat never accomplished before by any one. At these meetings he succeeded in inoculating 21,000 citizens of New York. (Laughter.) Though many people came in a spirit of curiosity, they left in solemnity. Letters were received by him in hundreds daily inquiring where mediums could be visited, and thanking him for the consolation he had afforded. It took two secretaries to handle the letters.

"After visiting a number of cities, Sir Arthur wound up with Chicago, where he had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Warne and Mrs. Cadwalader. He found audiences in Chicago just as keen as those in New York. He delivered three lectures. As an illustration of the keen interest displayed, Sir Arthur described a strange scene which happened there one night at the close of a lecture. It was raining, and he was waiting, without an umbrella, to get a vehicle to take him to his hotel. In a moment a crowd gathered round him and started arguing theology and asking him about the next world. No novelist could have imagined or described such a scene—in a public street, in the rain, a crowd of eager people asking him about the next world and their future there.

"When he passed Rochester he recalled the famous event of March 31st, 1848, with the Fox girls, and thought what a disgrace it was that no memorial of

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it existed. In Chicago, at a Spiritualist meeting, he proposed that they should start a world-wide fund for the purpose of erecting some worthy monument. There he met a splendid recruit to the cause, Colonel West, who announced that he was going to devote the rest of his life to this work. The Colonel was one of those magnetic personalities who were natural leaders of men. At a later date Sir Arthur intended to lay this matter before the Spiritualists of Great Britain.

"Speaking of his psychic experiences in America, he gave an account of a visit to Miss Ada Besinnet. Speaking of Mrs. Pruden, a remarkable slate-writing medium, through whom he received a splendid test, he said a peculiar quality about her was that she took a pleasure in giving sittings to unbelievers. He added that she would find plenty in London. With another medium in Brooklyn he received a very impressive message purporting to come from Professor William James, who said he had with him Dr. James Hyslop and Mr. F. W. H. Myers.

"Summing up the results of his tour, Sir Arthur said he did think he had made them realise that the Church and the Press could not go on for ever overlooking this great movement. The Church could not go on for ever burying its head in the sand wagging negatives with its tail. They must disprove our facts or else admit them. In America, as here, even amid the sneers, there was a peaceful penetration going on, and the waters of life were filtering down into the deepest strata. We have tapped the living spring of true religion which has been crusted over for many

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centuries and is now running free once more for all mankind to drink. (Loud applause.)

"He expressed his gratitude to the unseen forces who at all times, he felt, were guarding them. They had had never a day's illness, nor any contretemps. He added: 'I would like to give thanks now to those great powers of whose protection my wife and I were always intensely conscious.' (Loud applause.)"

And so ended our adventure. Here, as in Australia, we were greatly guarded, and not one out of seven had ever an hour in bed from illness. My task was for the time interrupted, but, alas! not done. All the great cities of the West without one exception had called me, and to all I had to give denial. Can I leave it so? If health and strength are given me, I will not leave it so; for if the choice were given me, I would in truth rather wear myself out in three years of such work than spend twenty years of comfortable but inactive age among my flowers and my books. So perhaps—but only perhaps—this book is but half written.

THE END

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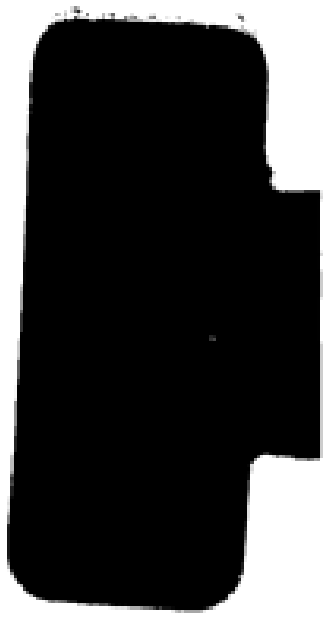

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