

FOREIGN NOTES

HINTS TO SITTERS

A CONTRIBUTOR to the May-July quarterly *Clartés Nouvelles* (Paris) describes at some length how one night he became aware of a presence in his room behind his back, as he lay in bed. Under the impression that it was someone intent on evil doing, he decided to turn suddenly round and confront the intruder. He did so, and was dumbfounded to see the figure of his deceased father bending over him, only to fade slowly away as he gazed at him. The writer says: "Later on, he informed me that he had come with the express purpose of helping me out of my difficulties, but that in consequence of my sudden movement and my transition from a passive to a nervous state, he had been unable to maintain his materialised condition."

On another occasion the same writer, Mr. Bedbrook, enquired of a guide what his nationality was, and received the reply "Iroquois." Not long afterwards at a sitting with friends, the same guide was asked to what tribe he belonged, and replied "Onendaga." Disturbed by this apparent contradiction, Mr. Bedbrook subsequently reported the occurrence to a living Red Indian, who told him that both replies were correct: the man's nationality had been Iroquois, of which people the Onendaga were one of its component five tribes. The communicator was justified—Mr. Bedbrook's doubts were not.

WILL-O'-THE-WISPS

The Oxford Pocket Dictionary defines a will-o'-the-wisp as "ignis fatuus; elusive person," and ignis fatuus as "phosphorescent light seen on marshy ground; delusive hope or aim." But in the *Zeitschrift für Seelenleben* (Leipzig) for June, Herr Johannes Illig, who declares that he has made a close study of the phenomenon for 20 years, adduces reasons why he considers that very often a psychic explanation is the only one tenable.

Most of the cases quoted by him have certain characteristics in common: the dancing lights are observed usually on dark nights in autumn; they are "cold" flames, never igniting any vegetation with which they come in contact; they appear to hover over the ground at a height of about three to four feet, unaccountably appearing and disappearing; they are accompanied by neither sound nor odour of any kind, and are usually of a somewhat triangular shape, broad at the base and tapering off indefinitely at the apex. These lights move with incredible swiftness, passing across fields and up and down the hillsides almost more rapidly than eye can follow.

On one occasion a shepherd, well-known to the writer

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developed since the year 1848, has blinded him to all which, in the past, links up the present with facts which should be of service and a warning to us to-day."

Concluding, Mrs. Stobart said that within the last month Mr. Findlay had made a gesture of sympathy with the movement for co-operation with the Clergy, by appearing on the platform at the inaugural meeting at the Grotian Hall. "I have every hope," she said, "that the lion may be going to lie down with the lamb; I have every hope that our modern, bigoted and dictatorial Saul, persecutor of the Christian Churches, may be transformed into the liberal-minded Paul, who included both Jews and Gentiles within the scope of his missionary efforts and his gospel of Survival."

"Those clergy who are now courageously and openly acknowledging the phenomena of Spiritualism," she said, "are, as I see it, the guardians of those embedded truths which they will once more be privileged to discover to the world when their new knowledge enables them to gain access, as of yore, to the Holy of Holies, and the Ark of the Eternal Covenant—the Covenant of Eternal Life."

of the article in question, saw a large coloured globe of fire rapidly approaching from the direction of a neighbouring cemetery, moving at a height of from four to six feet above the ground. His flock were badly scared when it came near; they huddled together in terror, and finally the shepherd was only just able to prevent them from stampeding altogether.

In another district, Herr Illig frequently observed what the natives there refer to as the "Advent Lights"—luminous globes of light never seen except at that season, sometimes hovering slowly to and fro above the tree-tops, at others darting with incredible swiftness from point to point.

His last account comes from a civil servant "of unimpeachable honesty," who frequently testified to an experience he met with when passing along a dark country road in pursuit of his duties. At a distance of sixty feet he suddenly saw a bright light coming towards him, which he took to emanate from a lantern carried by an approaching wayfarer. When within ten feet from him, however, it suddenly went out, immediately to re-appear twenty feet behind him. His first impression was that someone was playing some foolish joke upon him, but when—without a sound of footsteps or of movement, the mysterious light continued again and again to appear now in front, now behind, first on one side and then on the other, the man realised that something uncanny was afoot and made all haste to reach the nearest habitation. He was at the time wide awake and perfectly sober—a man of known integrity and good reasoning powers, and he concludes his account with the positive assertion that no human ingenuity could possibly have staged this weird dance of lights.

A STUDY OF PSYCHOMETRY

In the same number of the *Zeitschrift*, Dr. Peter Fischer, of Cologne, appeals to his readers to send him any direct observations they may have made on the technique of the psychometric faculty. After a prolonged study of a Cologne Psychometrist, Heinz Sangermann, he still feels unable to do more than vouch for certain features in the work of this psychic; perhaps the only definite conclusion he has arrived at being, that his results are due neither to influence from the discarnate, nor to telepathy from the living.

Sangermann, who started as a graphologist, when confronted with a person's signature, is able to read from it such things as, for instance, an exact description of the writer's place of work, the position of the windows in it, the arrangement of the desks and so on; he accurately describes other members of the family, previous happenings, their hopes and fears, and so forth.

Herr Illig has satisfied himself that:

- (1) the Medium's powers are variable.
- (2) he is at once in rapport with some signatures and can then give a full reading; with others he makes little contact.
- (3) the rapport is invariably better when the writer of the signature, or at any rate someone who knows the writer, is present.
- (4) the Medium can seldom answer questions put to him in connection with the writers; though his spontaneous communications about them are strikingly accurate.

When asked how he himself explains how he obtains such information, Sangermann declares that he sees what he describes as rather faint black and white etchings.

Herr Illig is anxious to compare his observations with those of other students of this subject.

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The Holiday Adventure
for Spiritualists.....

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