THE QUEST FOR DEAN BRIDGMAN CONNER

ANTHONY J. PHILPOTT



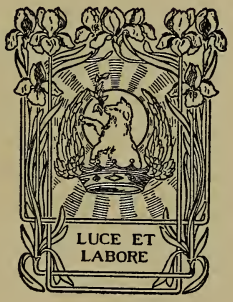
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DEDICATED TO

General Charles H. Taylor

A REAL NEWSPAPER MAN

INTRODUCTION

The search for Dean Bridgman Conner in Mexico under the clairvoyant instructions of the famous medium, Mrs. Leonora E. Piper, and under the guidance of Dr. Richard Hodgson, secretary of the American Branch of the Society for Psychical Research, was in many respects one of the strangest quests ever undertaken by a newspaper man or anybody else. But the full significance of the unravelling of the mystery was not so clearly comprehended at the time as it is today. Nor were the full bearing and significance of the investigation, in its relation to Psychical Research and psychic phenomena, so clearly understood; for through this case Dr. Hodgson and others confidently expected that the "Spiritistic" theory of immortality, which had been suggested as the only solution of Mrs. Piper's strange mediumistic powers, would be completely demonstrated.

And this would, in all probability, result in the promulgation of a new religion — a religion that would rest on a basis of conviction supported by facts obtained through laborious investigations and by scientific methods. Naturally it was expected that such a religion would

supersede the religions based on spiritual exaltation, prophecy and faith.

It was a case that had all the elements of a great mystery. A young American dies — or is supposed to have died — in Mexico; later, his father in Burlington, Vt., has a vivid dream in which the son assures him he is not dead but that he is alive and is being held for ransom. Mrs. Piper, in the trance state, and under the auspices of Dr. Richard Hodgson, substantiates the father's dream. Then follow two investigations in Mexico which only make the mystery more mysterious, and finally I am sent to clear the thing up one way or the other — to solve the mystery if possible.

One important thing about the case was the fact that in it were focalized some of the most important matters that had been under investigation by the Society for Psychical Research. There was a vivid dream; there was clairvoyance, automatic writing, telepathy over long distances, and finally there was a supreme test of the "spirit controls" that spoke through Mrs. Piper. These were the same "spirit controls" that had been investigated by Prof. William James, Professor Hyslop and others in this country; by Sir William Crookes, F. W. H. Myers, Edmund Gurney, Sir Oliver Lodge, Professor Sidgwick, Alfred Wallace and others in England; Professor Richet and

Paul Bourget in France, and many other eminent scientists. Mrs. Piper's extraordinary powers had amazed them all and had led some of them to the conclusion that the spirits of dead people spoke through her. And finally there was the adventure of attempting to prove all this, one way or the other, under unusual circumstances in a foreign land; besides the further adventure involved in the rescue of a young man who was supposed to be held captive in a strange institution in a remote part of Mexico.

In the whole course of my newspaper experience I never worked harder nor more conscientiously on a problem than on this mystery in which the death of Dean Bridgman Conner in Mexico was involved. My studies and researches covered a period of five months, during which time I travelled more than eleven thousand miles in the United States and Mexico.

As a piece of newspaper work, at the time it was so far removed from the beaten path of general news that it was regarded by many people as a fake — or as fiction — which after all only emphasizes anew the fact that truth in the affairs of life is very often much stranger than fiction.

For a long time I refrained from writing out a full narrative of my experiences in the case,

because of the embarrassment it might cause a number of people, but so many have urged me on the ground that it would be a most important contribution to Psychical Research, that I decided to do it. And curiously enough — so deep an impression did everything connected with the case make on me — I found the facts were as vivid in my mind as when I worked on the mystery. It is the sort of thing one does not cease thinking about nor easily forget, and time has only enabled me to see more clearly many things which were rather vague eighteen years ago. Time has also vindicated my conclusions in the case. It was due to the enterprise of Gen. Charles H. Taylor of the *Boston Globe* that the mystery was cleared up. He felt that it should be cleared up and he paid the bills.

A. J. P.

THE QUEST FOR DEAN BRIDGMAN CONNER

CHAPTER I

I might as well introduce myself to the reader by means of the following letter, the necessity for which will appear later:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

January 23, 1897.

To the Diplomatic and Consular Officers of the United States in Mexico:

Gentlemen:

I take pleasure in herewith introducing Mr. A. J. Philpott, who is visiting Mexico for the purpose of ascertaining, if possible, the whereabouts of Dean Bridgman Conner, a young man formerly a resident of Burlington, Vt. You will extend to Mr. Philpott all possible official assistance for the successful prosecution of his efforts.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,
RICHARD OLNEY.

Mr. Olney was then Secretary of State under President Cleveland, and the letter is introduced here so that there will be no misunderstanding in regard to the mission on which I went to Mexico, to dispel any doubts regarding the seriousness of that mission and to make clear the importance attached to it.

But before this letter was penned by the Secretary of State — for nearly two years before — the case of Dean Bridgman Conner had been a great mystery and had been the cause of much uneasiness and anxiety for two very different reasons. But the astounding thing about the mystery was that it all practically began with a dream.

It was on a night some months after the reported death of Dean Bridgman Conner in the American hospital in the City of Mexico that his father, Mr. W. H. H. Conner, in Burlington, Vt., had this vivid dream in which the son appeared and said he was not dead, but was alive, and held a captive in Mexico.

That was startling enough. But a little later the dream attained additional importance, wider interest and more significance, when it was substantiated by Dr. Richard Hodgson, secretary of the American Branch of the Society for Psychical Research, and by the eminent trance medium, Mrs. Leonora E. Piper.

The dream had been tested by Dr. Hodgson,

considered the ablest psychical investigator in America at the time, and he was aided in his test by Mrs. Piper, whose remarkable clairvoyant powers have astonished many of the foremost investigators and scientists of Europe and America.

This verification of the dream resulted in three separate investigations and searches, in the Republic of Mexico, for Dean Bridgman Conner, by persons sent especially for the purpose; and they worked largely through the instructions of Dr. Hodgson, under the clairvoyant guidance of Mrs. Piper. I conducted the third of these investigations.

* * * * * * *

Dean Bridgman Conner was a respected young man, about twenty-seven years old, when he went from the United States to the City of Mexico, in the latter part of 1894, to work in Orrin's circus and theatre as electrician and manager of the lights. After his arrival in the city he worked about ten weeks when he was taken seriously ill with typhoid fever. After the first week of his illness he was removed, on the 21st of February, 1895, from the house in which he lodged to the American hospital on the outskirts of the city.

Twenty-three days later the American Consul-General in the City of Mexico sent word to

Mr. W. H. H. Conner in Burlington, Vt., that his son, Dean Bridgman Conner, had died in the American hospital and had been buried in the American cemetery, near the hospital.

The American Consul-General at the time was Ex-Governor Thomas T. Crittenden, of Missouri. When Mr. Conner was first notified of his son's illness he wired the Consul-General urging that no expense be spared in the matter of care and medical attendance.

Soon after the funeral Consul-General Crittenden forwarded the baggage and personal effects to the parents at Burlington, Vt., and wrote a letter which deeply impressed them; for it showed that he was a kindly gentleman who had done all that was possible for their son during his illness at the hospital and in providing for the interment in the American cemetery. He said he had attended the funeral and had placed a flower, moistened with tears, on the young man's grave. And he said that Dean had been buried under the Stars and Stripes.

It is no wonder then that Consul-General Crittenden should, in the language of diplomacy, "consider the incident closed."

But it wasn't closed.

The father's vivid dream opened it all up anew — opened up every circumstance and incident in the life of Dean Bridgman Conner

in Mexico, and caused the Consul-General and others considerable trouble and anxiety for several years thereafter; to say nothing of three of the strangest quests ever undertaken to discover the whereabouts of a person whose death and burial had been officially registered, but who, in spite of that fact, was reported to be alive and held captive in some remote part of Mexico.

While Governor of Missouri Thomas T. Crittenden had gained some notoriety through his connection with the death of the noted outlaw, Jesse James. It was because of the reward offered by the Governor that Jesse James was shot and killed under unusual circumstances. Although the method rather shocked the public at the time, yet the dastardly character of the bandit was considered sufficient excuse for so unusual a proceeding.

CHAPTER II

From the day word was received of Dean Bridgman Conner's death there had been an undercurrent of suspicion and doubt about the matter in the minds of several people — relatives and friends — in Burlington, Vt. At first there was nothing particularly tangible on which to base these suspicions and doubts except possibly a feeling or "hunch" which seemed to possess both Mr. and Mrs. Prentiss C. Dodge from the moment when they heard of Dean's illness.

Mrs. Prentiss C. Dodge had known Dean Bridgman Conner from his childhood and had always entertained a very tender regard for him. Her husband, Prentiss C. Dodge, also thought a great deal of the young man. In fact, he was regarded almost as a member of the Dodge household, and was always welcome there.

Mrs. Dodge could not bring herself to believe that he was dead. She felt there was something wrong — some mystery — about his reported death, and she communicated her suspicions and fears both to her husband and to the young man's father, W. H. H. Conner, who was at that time assistant postmaster of

Burlington. Letters they received in response to inquiries from people in Mexico did not tend to allay their suspicions, but rather to increase them. No responsible person, as far as they could learn, had actually seen the body of Dean Bridgman Conner after death.

Some importance was also attached to the fact that a jewel, or jewels, of an unknown value, the property of the young man, had not been returned with his effects from Mexico. The Consul-General's explanation regarding these missing jewels was not considered wholly satisfactory. And, by that curious process of mental indirection which associates unrelated things, their attitude toward the Consul-General was probably tinctured by their feelings regarding the Jesse James homicide.

So all that was needed about this time was that vivid dream of the young man's father to bring these vague suspicions and doubts to a focus.

But how prove the dream?

The dream simply strengthened Mrs. Dodge and others in their suspicions, for these suspicions and doubts had become so strong and dominant that even "the fabric of a dream" looked like real evidence. Still it was not the kind of evidence that would be accepted by the average person, loath as most people are to believe that there is not something in dreams.

One thing that gave Mr. Conner's dream some immediate standing and dignity in Burlington, Vt., was the fact that he himself was not the kind of a man who had ever been regarded as a dreamer or a visionary. He was regarded as a practical man.

But this was an unusual dream, and under the circumstances it was both startling and dramatic. To Mrs. Dodge and others it seemed like an occult demonstration — a voice out of oblivion — that gave weight and authority to existing doubts and suspicions. It was of especial significance to Mr. and Mrs. Dodge, who were more than academically interested in the mysterious phenomena associated with spiritualism. The dream fitted perfectly into the fabric of their feelings and suspicions about Dean Bridgman Conner.

Yet the dream ought to be proved or substantiated in some way. But how? Every age has its dream interpreters as well as its dreamers; its visionaries and prophets as well as its pessimists and doubters. At this particular time the Society for Psychical Research, which included in its membership many eminent scientists and scholars of Europe and America, was busying itself — or themselves — with the study of dreams, delusions, illusions and all kinds of subnormal and abnormal mental phenomena.

There were two branches of this Society, the English and the American. Dr. Richard Hodgson was secretary of the American Branch and he was indefatigable in his pursuit and investigation of strange mental phenomena, including dreams, illusions, spirit communications, etc. He was a terror to fake spiritualists, fake mediums, fake clairvoyants and fakers of this kind generally. So, naturally, when he put the stamp of his approval on any kind of mental manifestation, whether it was a dream or a spiritualistic phenomenon, that meant a great deal — it was in a large measure authoritative.

It was Rev. Minot J. Savage who advised Mr. W. H. H. Conner and his friends to submit the dream to Dr. Richard Hodgson. Mr. Savage was an eminent Unitarian divine who had been interested in the study of dreams, visions and such phenomena. At this particular time, however, he had given up such studies largely because the American Branch of the Society for Psychical Research had taken up this line of investigation and had more and better facilities for pursuing it.

It was through these investigations that Dr. Hodgson became interested in Mrs. Piper. Both he and Prof. William James, who had been a president of the Society for Psychical Research, had carefully tested and investigated

Mrs. Piper. Her mysterious power while in the trance state had also been investigated by such scientists as Professor Richet of Paris, Sir Oliver Lodge, Lord Crookes, Paul Bourget and others, and she had baffled them all. So successful had she been in the tests to which she had been subjected that at this time Dr. Hodgson had the greatest faith in her mysterious powers and used her as a sort of "official medium" and demonstrator of the occult for the Society.

So when the dream of W. H. H. Conner had been tested and approved by Dr. Hodgson and Mrs. Piper it is little wonder that the friends and relatives of Dean Bridgman Conner became very much excited. Who wouldn't under such circumstances?

Mrs. Piper was no ordinary medium. Some of the biggest men in the world regarded her as an oracle. People — eminent people — came from all over the world to consult her and have "sittings" with her while she was in the trance state. Her automatic writings, or her utterances, while in this trance state were regarded with as much faith as ever were the utterances of a Delphic oracle by the ancient Greeks. A new kind of religion was being built around this woman by such men as Dr. Hodgson. They had been convinced that through her sensitive mind and body spirits of the known dead had spoken and written.

Through her the age-long riddle of immortality and a spirit world had been solved to their satisfaction.

This new religion was not to be taken on faith — it was to be taken on a kind of evidence which satisfied scientific investigators. Through her the scientific mind was feeling its way by cautious experimentation and investigation into the spirit world and proving immortality by scientific methods, and by new processes of deduction. True, there was nothing inspiring in this woman when she was in the normal state, but when she was in the trance state she was different. She didn't then know what she said or did; she was simply a "medium" of communication between the spirit world and Dr. Hodgson and the others who were present at such times, who had "sittings" with her.

There were certain spirits of known and unknown dead that spoke through Mrs. Piper while in the trance state, and these were known to Dr. Hodgson and the others who had investigated her. Dr. Hodgson had always been a materialist whose materialism was based on Herbert Spencer's philosophy, until he met and investigated Mrs. Piper. She changed him — changed his whole life — made him a firm believer in a new spiritualism. He called it, and others called it, "Spiritism."

Is it any wonder that the dream in this particular case was accepted when it had such approval?

Such well-known spirits as "Phinuit" or "Dr. Phinuit" — one of the first and earliest spirits that spoke through Mrs. Piper — had verified the dream. Other known spirits had also verified the dream.

When Dr. Hodgson was appealed to he asked for some of Dean Bridgman Conner's personal effects; something tangible relating to his personality — clothes or trinkets that Mrs. Piper could touch while she was in the trance state or that should be near her at the moment. Some "effects" were forwarded to him and he had a "sitting" with Mrs. Piper.

CHAPTER III

At the first "sitting" Mrs. Piper's spirit "controls" could do nothing, so more "effects" were sent for. Then Mr. Prentiss C. Dodge came down from Burlington to Boston and brought with him some letters which had been written by the young man from Mexico, some photographs and personal effects. Mrs. Piper was not permitted to see either the letters or the photographs, but at the next "sitting," which Mr. Dodge attended in company with Dr. Hodgson, he had these letters and photographs with him.

At the second "sitting" Mrs. Piper gave the name of the young man, described in detail his trip by steamer from New York to Vera Cruz and thence overland to the City of Mexico; his work in the circus; his sickness in the hospital, from which she claimed he had been kidnapped the night of his reported death, while the body of a patient who had died in the next ward or room had been substituted for Dean Bridgman Conner, and had been buried in the American cemetery under Conner's name. Mrs. Piper also described the American hospital very minutely; the matron of the institution, and gave her name; the head phy-

sician, and gave his name; and explained that the young man during his illness had been confined in a room in a building at the rear of the main building. She claimed that he had been taken from the hospital at night by the "south road," and vaguely intimated that he was being held for ransom or some other dark purpose. That was all the information she could give at that time and for some months thereafter, owing to an illness during which she could give no "sittings."

But that was enough. The dream had been confirmed by the greatest medium in the world, a medium in whom the eminent scientists and investigators of the Psychical Research Society had faith. A verification from such a source was like giving the dream the substance of scientific backing, and naturally the people in Burlington, Vt., were very much elated and excited.

In the meantime the people in Burlington had been further investigating, through correspondence, the circumstances connected with the illness and reported death of the young man. A photograph of the hospital had been received from the Consul-General, on which he marked a window in the front of the main building, stating that in the marked room Dean had died, when in point of fact it was learned that the young man had been placed in the

contagious ward at the rear of the main building, a fact which Mrs. Piper also corroborated. Why the Consul-General should have made this statement is a mystery, unless it was that he did it in the same spirit in which he made some other statements — a desire to satisfy the young man's parents and friends in Burlington and relieve their minds at the expense of a little fiction which seemingly would not be found out when the interested parties were over four thousand miles away.

Some things were learned about the hospital which did not tend to allay the suspicions of the people in Burlington, and when added to these came Mrs. Piper's verification of the dream, it was decided to send Mr. Dodge to Mexico at once to investigate the case and bring back the young man, if possible, from his enforced captivity.

CHAPTER IV

To Prentiss C. Dodge, Mexico was a land of mystery, a land in which any sort of dark deed was possible, and inhabited by a treacherous people. He was filled with suspicions from the start, and he found some things after his arrival in the City of Mexico which tended to strengthen his suspicions regarding the alleged death of Dean Bridgman Conner.

After his arrival in the City of Mexico Mr. Dodge paid a visit to the American hospital and found that, as he had learned and as Mrs. Piper had stated, young Conner had occupied a room in the contagious ward, which was in the rear of the main building. The matron, Mrs. Netterburgh, told him the circumstances of Dean's sickness, death and burial. She had not seen the body after death, but she was very positive the young man had died and had been buried in the American cemetery near by. A Mexican male nurse who had attended young Conner was produced, but as he could speak very little English, he did not make much of an impression on Mr. Dodge, who, on the whole, did not like the appearance of things at the hospital. The head physician, Dr. Bray, did not impress him favorably either. Mr. Dodge

thought he detected subterfuge in much that was said.

The Consul-General had not attended the funeral as he said he had — in fact, nobody but the two Mexican mozos, who carried the coffin on their heads to the American cemetery early on that March morning, and the caretakers and workmen of the cemetery had been present at the interment. No trace of the precious stones which Conner was supposed to have owned could be found.

Mrs. Piper had insisted that the body in the cemetery be exhumed to prove that what she said was correct. It was some time before Mr. Dodge could get permission to do this, however, owing to the fact that the death of the occupant of grave 559 in the American cemetery had been reported as caused by a contagious disease. But he finally got the requisite permit from the government, and in the presence of several American residents of the City of Mexico the body was exhumed after it had been in the ground for about a year. Four teeth were removed from the upper jaw of the skull, a lock of hair was cut off, and the skull photographed on the edge of the grave.

Mr. Dodge was pretty well convinced at the time that the body which was exhumed was the body of his friend, Dean Bridgman Conner,

and so wired the young man's father. The grave in the American cemetery was an ordinary one, and the young man's parents had been given to understand that the grave in which Dean had been interred, and for which they had paid, was a cemented and brick-lined grave. So Dr. Richard Hodgson was wired for more "light," if possible, from Mrs. Piper on the subject, and Mr. Dodge received the following telegram:

"Piper sitting yesterday. Phinuit said Dean taken along south road into country house. George went to see and said Dean had been taken to Tuxedo. No chance for another sitting. Hodgson."

This needs a little explanation. "Phinuit," or "Dr. Phinuit," as he is called, is one of the "controls" or "spirits" that are said to take possession of Mrs. Piper while she is in the trance state, and speak through her. "George," or "George Pelham," is another. Those who have had many sittings with Mrs. Piper recognize almost immediately these wandering spirits from another world who speak through her, for each has distinguishing characteristics apparently, and might be said to possess distinct lines of ability in the spirit world. Dr. Phinuit was Mrs. Piper's first and only "control" for a number of years. He claimed to have been a French doctor who had lived in

the south of France during the latter part of the eighteenth century. No record of such a doctor has ever been found. He tells some first-class lies on occasion, but he seems to regard a lie as a good joke. George Pelham is a later and apparently a more reliable "control."

But to come back to the telegram. Mr. Dodge found it rather hazy and could not discover any place named "Tuxedo" in Mexico. This telegram possesses some significance, however, which will be explained later.

So, after some further investigations, which resulted in little, Mr. Dodge came home with the teeth, hair and photographs of the skull and a great many doubts and fears. He could not find any "south road" leading from the hospital, in front of which there was a very ordinary street which led into the main street that runs into the heart of the City of Mexico from Tlaxpana. He found that a railroad ran from the City of Mexico somewhat to the southeast, which branched off to the city of Puebla. This railroad also went to Orizaba and Vera Cruz. He came home with many strange impressions of the country, its people and its architecture.

His non-success, however, did not discourage the people in Burlington who were interested in the case — in fact, it only appeared to in-

tensify their convictions that Dean Bridgman Conner was alive.

The teeth were examined by a dentist in Burlington who had done work on the young man's teeth some years previously, and he pronounced them as not the teeth of Dean Bridgman Conner. The hair was examined by an eminent physician and bacteriologist of the same city, who had known young Conner, and it was compared with a sample in the possession of Mrs. Dodge and pronounced as not the hair of the young man. The photographs of the skull were also rejected.

Here, then, was the testimony of scientific experts practically backing up Dr. Hodgson, Mrs. Piper and the dream. So, whatever doubts Mr. Dodge might have had were thus smothered, and he, too, became convinced that the body in grave 559 of the American cemetery in the City of Mexico was not that of Dean Bridgman Conner. The only thing left, however, was to wait patiently for the recovery of Mrs. Piper, on whom the burden of locating the young man was now placed.

CHAPTER V

It was in the spring of 1896 that Mr. Dodge returned from Mexico and not until October of the same year was Mrs. Piper in condition to continue her clairvoyant "sittings."

These "sittings" were of a somewhat startling character, and resulted in a second visit to Mexico by Mr. Dodge in company with Dr. Sparhawk, a physician of Burlington who had known Dean Bridgman Conner intimately.

Just to show the kind of information which Mrs. Piper gives, or rather gave, while in the trance state, it might be well to give a verbatim transcript of a few of the "sittings" with Dr. Hodgson and Mr. Dodge. It should be understood that Mrs. Piper, while in the trance state, wrote on a paper pad with a lead pencil, in a scrawl which was very difficult to read. Her face usually rested on a pillow, on a table in front of her, so she could not see the paper on which she wrote. Dr. Hodgson guided the hand and removed each sheet of paper as fast as it was written upon. He later transcribed Mrs. Piper's writing and added thereto, by way of explanation, sentences and paragraphs such as will be found enclosed in parentheses in the accompanying transcript.

In parentheses will also be found the questions which Dr. Hodgson asked the "controls" during the progress of the "sitting."

"G. P.," or George Pelham, as has been said, is supposed to be one of Mrs. Piper's best "controls." Before his death he was an intimate friend of Dr. Hodgson's, who promised that if he should die before Dr. Hodgson and found that there was a future life he would use every effort to communicate with the latter. Dr. Hodgson made a similar promise, and they agreed on certain matters, known only to themselves, to be communicated for the purpose of making identification certain. George Pelham met with an accident which resulted in his death, and soon after Dr. Hodgson received a communication from him while Mrs. Piper was in the trance state. Identification, by the very test agreed upon between the men, was established, and thereafter George Pelham's spirit was not only the most powerful and reliable of Mrs. Piper's "controls," but became in a large measure the guiding spirit of the policy of Dr. Hodgson's life up to the day of his death.

Dr. Phinuit, as has been said, was for a long time Mrs. Piper's first and only "control." Some of his communications, as recorded in numerous reports, have been very remarkable, but it was early discovered that this spirit of

an eighteenth-century French physician had a very common human characteristic — he lied. He didn't always lie; in fact, he very often told what proved to be the truth, and this made it more difficult to understand his apparent tendency to lie. He was apt to mingle truth and falsehood in a way that created complete confusion in the minds of investigators.

Finally, however, when he was openly charged with lying he laughed and his explanation was so ingenuous that it only served to strengthen the conviction that he was indeed a true spirit of an earth-born creature, and a very ordinary one at that. He turned out to be one of the practical jokers of the spirit world, one whose sense of humor was satisfied by misleading others through lying or dissembling. The excuse he offered was that the spirits occasionally enjoyed the confusion of human beings who could be misled.

Yet this excuse was accepted without question by even exacting, scientific investigators, probably because it explained some things that otherwise seemed unexplainable. However, it put the investigators on their guard against Dr. Phinuit, for even a scientific investigator does not relish being made the victim of a practical joke by a spirit any more than by an ordinary mortal. In fact, most people would prefer the practical jokes of an ordinary per-

son in the flesh to the inscrutable humor of an invisible joker like Dr. Phinuit.

So it was a great relief to Dr. Hodgson and the other investigators of what came to be known as the "Piper Phenomena" when other and more reliable spirits began to speak and manifest themselves when Mrs. Piper was in the trance state.

There were several other "controls," such as "John Heard," "Moses," "Imperator" and "Rector," that took possession of Mrs. Piper.

CHAPTER VI

The following transcript from a verbatim report of one of the "sittings" with Mrs. Piper, held with Mr. Dodge and Dr. Hodgson, gives a fair idea of the case of Dean Bridgman Conner after Mr. Dodge's return from Mexico the first time. It will be noticed that George Pelham in this "sitting" refers to the agreement made between himself and Dr. Hodgson before Pelham's death where he says, "Hodgson, I gave my word I would prove myself to you." A peculiarity of all the communications through Mrs. Piper is their broken, fragmentary character, and a certain nervous effort in them. There is also what looks like "fishing" for a suggestion from those present.

Report of Sitting with Mrs. Piper, October 21, 1896

Present: P. C. Dodge and Richard Hodgson. (George Pelham, writing.)

Comment by Dr. Hodgson: (Hand much excited. I urge not to be so excited, etc.)

G. P. writes: I now see his father and I cannot wait . . . speak to me and I will prove my friendship for you, sir. How are you, Mr. (Mrs.?)

Dodge: Very nicely.

G. P. writes: I see you and now listen. I am so glad to see you sir because my mind is troubled — for you, and I will now put you on track of your boy Dean. Thanks for obedience. It was not his body in that grave as I told you before. Now he is in a rather demented state of mind in a hospital for insane patients and he is in the south of the same country, Mexico. I see a dark gentleman or a man with him continuously. He is there as true as you're alive. Give me something now. Oh do. Oh do.

(Dodge gets articles from a box full of clothes, etc., of Dean, which he has taken to sitting.)

G. P. writes: This is the way it is. Driven almost to despair because of Palmer, he after his quarrel with Palmer never was happy, and went there because of Palmer. I can prove every statement I may make to Palmer if you so wish it. I am more anxious over this than you yourself are. He went there, was taken ill as a matter of fact, was really sent to the hospital, was attended there, but was helped to funds so to speak, this being a temptation to the attending. They got some of his clothing after the so-called death of one of the patients (they) dressed the body in Dean's clothes, buried the body, and Dean being in state of delirium, they thinking there was

money in him, kept him for three days; then after taking his jewels, money, etc., watch, opals, various pieces of jewelry, they put him into a carriage and he has been ever since in the building under guard, and I do see and follow this (i.e., the clothes, the hand gesturing with the articles to indicate) to him, — follow this until I see him. I assure you he is still alive and in this building which I described to you before.

Dodge: You mentioned it, but not in detail.

G. P. writes: Oh no, I think not. But I did the hospital. Now speak to me and ask me any conceivable question on earth. Slowly — yes, certainly, I do.

(Dr. Hodgson refers to Imperator and other persons known to Imperator who may make a specialty of tracing names of places, etc., and asks if it wouldn't be wise to appeal for help to any such persons and try to get the precise location, city, building, etc., where Dean is.)

G. P. writes: Yes, very good suggestion. I am sure and clear of his identity. Now, outside of the city where I saw you go is a town adjoining the city in the country of Mexico. SCINTZ by name — there is a building . . . . is a gentleman . . city.

(Many attempts at spelling a name like *Cintz*.)

G. P. writes: In his (Dean's) last letter to

you he said something about not being well. . . . may just as well say he was stolen because it amounts to the same thing. I know I am on the right track, H. Here comes Imperator. Do you know what I am doing? I am looking at the name over this building. I am following a stream of so-called water into this town outside of the city of Mexico, to help locate this demented young man who is still being held a captive.

Dr. Hodgson: It's not likely you'll see on the building the name of the town.

G. P. writes: You mistake me. I mean the building and town. C. is right, Cinua . . Mareco . . . (Continued attempts at name.) I would ask someone to come with. I am determined to put you straight. . . . PUEBLO . . C. . . . . Imperator . . . PUEBLO . . CINE is a French name or Latin. . . well. ad quom (?) usfa . . . (?) homo . . . homo . . . ad quom . . . Latin, do you forget your Latin, Hodgson — ad . . ad (To, towards) quem (?) (Only *ad* and *homo* deciphered at sitting) . . a gentleman . . to . (gentleman's name Aquem?) Man . . homo. . PREBULO . . SOUTH, PUEBLO.

Dr. Hodgson: South, what of?

G. P. writes: Mexico.

Dr. Hodgson: Southern Road?

G. P.: Southern Road. There is no doubt

about this, not in the least. Tell me how you felt when you found it was not he. (To Dodge.)

(Dodge told how the people swore it was Dean, etc., and how he found on opening the grave that it wasn't Dean's body; hair dark instead of light, teeth not Dean's according to dentist expert, etc.)

G. P.: Well this is all a lie, the whole d—— thing, and you will find it out so ere long, Dodge.

Dodge: Is he now in Pueblo?

G. P.: He is.

Dodge: Southern Road?

G. P.: Yes, sir. . . . he is in the hands of Cene, Cintz.

Dodge: Is he in a public or private building?

G. P.: There are only a few inmates there, and it is a rather rude affair, and they are keeping him for the reward and do not you give it but rely on your friend George Pelham, and he will help you clear up this terrible pack of lies and expose to light the villains.

Dr. Hodgson: (Would it be well for you to go *now* and find out where he is if possible?)

G. P.: Yes, I intend this, Hodgson, yet every moment I receive this influence it is a help to me.

Dr. Hodgson: Take all the influence you can get. (Giving all the articles.)

G. P.: Some of these articles were sent to

you and have been handled by other persons now (?) you had in the hospital. Hodgson, ask him (Dodge) what they meant by saying they were keeping flowers on his grave.

Dodge: They got some money to keep flowers on his grave.

G. P.: Well I think we know we can see the inside of a grave as well as they can. This is a great pity because it has so worn on you. But do not be discouraged and give me one more chance is all I wish. In Mexico the Southern Road is correct so far, and beyond this I can give you no light until I see you again.

Dr. Hodgson: Dodge will come the next time with me. You get Home and Moses and anybody else that can help, and the Doctor, and try and locate him in a way that will enable us in this world to find him. The name of the town or village where he is, and the name of the building.

G. P.: Good, Hodgson. Yes, all right. I will. Hodgson, I gave you my word that I would prove myself to you. I now give you my word that I will find Dean (Good) or at least I have found him, but I wish to lead you to find him also. But location of places is not easy, but I could never mistake as to whether a person was in or out of their body; because articles and patient search will help me to know whether a person is in their body or not.

Now PUEBLO is the name of the place, but there are many things to give you yet. PUEBLO — I spelt it again and again— PUEBLO. Listen. Before the light was taken away from me I tried to write SOUTHERN ROAD. (He means before Mrs. Piper's operation.) But I could only get to or as far as SOUTH. I tried and tried but it was no use. Your boy is still in that country. Any questions?

Dr. Hodgson: We want to go and find him.

G. P.: Exactly.

Dr. Hodgson: If we send anybody can we find the place?

G. P.: Yes, but I would rather give you a clearer explanation or description.

Dr. Hodgson: You do not think now that he has passed out, do you?

G. P.: No.

Dr. Hodgson: Thanks. Tell us exactly where he is.

G. P.: You bet I will. Give me some . . a few things. I would not take the consul's word for a straw.

Dr. Hodgson: Dodge says: "He lied to me."

G. P.: Well, I know he did. Yes, sir. I have all I wish but his watch. I wish one thing more. (article. Disturbance) Excuse me. . . power. . . . good. . I'll go now. The

poor boy, he has had enough trouble. Do not fret. You shall return.

Adieu.

(Phinuit talks.)

Comment by Dr. Hodgson: (*Cap* of Dean had been given to Phinuit at beginning of sitting.)

Phinuit: Influence of young man in the body. Little trouble in his head. He hasn't been very well physically, but he's getting clearer. They gave him some medicine, morphine, that kind of a thing. That fellow who's with him, he's got very dark skin. Don't you fear at all. All your troubles will be cleared. Give me something (belt given.) (to Dodge.) What's that thing you keep writing on all the time? Head man is a scoundrel, that has charge of the state or town.

Dodge: What does he look like?

Phinuit: Hair gray, white mustache — consul —

Dodge: What color is the son's hair? (Meaning the Consul-General's son.)

Phinuit: Sandy — parts here, (indicating correctly).

Dodge: Curly or straight?

Phinuit: A little like this (curly). Spots on his face. Building he's in now (i.e., Dean) Little arch way like . . . something together with cement like.

Dodge: Mud? Made-stone?

Phinuit: It's made not of mud, but not brick, but stone cemented together. Gate. Barbed iron stakes like, a little fancy like work at top. You can drive through the gate if you can get in. Very cranky people there. The building is on the right hand side, not a very large building. About 25 persons there. Little, short, dark man, large nose, with spectacles, keeper of entrance. Gate arch way. Steps. Word OFFICE on door. Dark narrow passage . . then turn to left, — then on right side is cot and young man there. There's seven lights in the window. There's a little round window. There's a number on the door. It's 4. Right hand side as you go down the ward. Very thin, very pale. Looks as though he'd been very sick.

* * * * * *

Some further explanation of this "sitting" of Mrs. Piper with Dr. Hodgson and Mr. Dodge is necessary.

It should be borne in mind that Dr. Hodgson from his long experience with Mrs. Piper presumably knew how to adapt himself to conditions, direct the questions and in fact aid the spirits in ways that he considered necessary under the circumstances. And perhaps it might make matters a little clearer if it were explained that Mrs. Piper's various "controls" crowded

her at times while in the trance state. That is, she experienced some difficulty in continuing to use one particular "control" when the others were insistent to be heard.

George Pelham was the first "control" to speak, or rather write, through Mrs. Piper on this occasion. The questions and explanations are by Dr. Hodgson and Mr. Dodge.

When George Pelham took possession of Mrs. Piper's hand to write, Dr. Hodgson urged the "control" not to be so excited. The "control" first spoke to Mr. Dodge.

"Imperator," "Home," "Heard," and "Moses" are also "controls" whose peculiar abilities were known to Dr. Hodgson from former experiences with them.

The reference to "Palmer" means that prior to his visit to Mexico, Dean Bridgman Conner had worked for the late A. M. Palmer, the theatrical manager, and had had some trouble with him.

The city of Puebla is, of course, the city that was meant — not Pueblo — and it is about seventy-five miles southeast of the City of Mexico, and is connected by railroad with the latter city.

The information which Phinuit gave was in elucidation of what George Pelham had given.

CHAPTER VII

The next "sitting" is even more lucid than the first in some respects and should be understood more readily. Phinuit opens this second "sitting" but quickly gives way to George Pelham. Then Phinuit concludes with a diagram which shows the route taken by Dean Bridgman Conner and his captors from the American hospital to the city of Puebla.

Dr. Bray was the head physician in the American hospital at the time.

The "control" Heard, it will be noticed, communicates through George Pelham.

This second "sitting" should be carefully read, as it contains a great deal that had to be cleared up in a satisfactory manner, and much that was confusing to the investigators.

SITTING WITH MRS. PIPER, OCTOBER 22, 1896

Present: P. C. Dodge and Richard Hodgson.

Phinuit: I've been in another country since I saw you, and George and a lot of fellows.

G. P. writes: I have been to Mexico, Hodgson, and taken Home, Heard, etc. and we went to PUEBLA on the Southern R.R. and I

asked Heard to speak the name for me distinctly, which is Southern R.R. and Cintz is the name of the man in charge of the institution in which Dean is being held. They call it after the name of the ARIBOZA, a small stream, . . also the insane hospital. He was at first taken with a fever. When on the road to recovery, Walch in the next room died, so to speak, ... a mistake, Welch died. They drugged Dean, took his clothing, put it on to Welch's body, buried him, took Dean by railroad to this place, and he has never recovered his right mind since, but he is alive still, and an inmate of Cintz's institution. There isn't the slightest . . . all right old man (to "invisible") . . . yes, Room 4. . . ARIBOZA (That's the stream?) Yes, also the name over the door.

Dr. Hodgson: What is the name of the village or city?

G. P.: PUEBLA . . . . . John Heard . . all right (To "invisible.") one moment. Hodgson. See here. They did not dare to kill him, so to speak, but they kept him for the money there was in him. They have always wished you would offer a reward for him, but do not do it. I will help you to find him and then you can do as you like about arresting the whole mob. John says get your "boy first" — (Dr. Hodgson reads this as "long fist," which is

probably interpreted as an independent remark at first, and hence what immediately follows) and smash him . . the boy FIRST. You will find all of Dean's Brid . . . B. R. . . . Connor . . . CORNOR . . . CONNOR . . Heard says CORR . . CONNOR . . is in this city, in this building which I describe. Is insane in Room 4 . . . is in this building which I describe — in Room 4. There is nothing else to be said at present only to implore you to send or go at once.

Dr. Hodgson: Hold on a moment, George, while I turn the leaves.

G. P.: I cannot wait, Hodgson. . . Well you see H. (Heard) is talking and I cannot get all words.

Dr. Hodgson: Tell him to wait too.

G. P.: Listen. Go at once or send another and get him out of this as soon as possible. Do not think that if he was in his right mind he would tarry there long. They did not dare take him out of his body and take it for vivisection, so they shut him up one night after dark. It is the most damnable piece of Brutality I have known in this world or yours. But there, it is as it is, and I cannot help it, as I can see, Hodgson, only to give you light and then let you act. Gloves, articles, etc., etc., (hand reaches out towards article). Yes, one and the same Dean Bridgeman Connor.

(Hand much excited. R. H. suggests calmness, etc.)

G. P.: You are too nervous, Hodgson, I say it is one and the same. It is one and the same identical fellow . . . yes, Heard told me this but his beard is all grown and you would scarcely recognize him and —

Dr. Hodgson: What color is his beard?

G. P.: Like this (feeling beard of Richard Hodgson) only lighter. He is a prisoner and has been for over or nearly two years. I heard Heard say what has become of his . . . . speak a little slower John . . cigar-case I say I must see to H. Give it to H. Yes. Now go on. Ask me any questions. By Jove, Hodgson, old chap, I little thought I should be here before you, hunting up lost strayed or stolen chaps.

Dr. Hodgson: Neither did I.

G. P.: Well, by Jove, when Phinuit came to me with this mixed up tale of woe and told me fragments about Mexico, I said, here old fellow, come on, I am just the fellow to help you out. Come on, boys, ask your questions, I am ready. Slowly.

Dr. Hodgson: Ought this gentleman to go down himself?

G. P.: Yes.

Dr. Hodgson: Will he have difficulty in getting access to the Institution?

G. P.: Yes, a little.

Dr. Hodgson: How can he get in?

G. P.: By not making himself known.

Dr. Hodgson: What steps had he better take?

G. P.: Go to the office and make inquiries for Cintz. Then there will appear to your vision a young man short of stature, not large, dark hair, mustache, wearing glasses, and broken accent, dressed in brown mixture, something. Come over here, out of Heard's way, Hodgson. Come over here, Hodgson. (hand indicates change of position for Richard Hodgson who changes accordingly) leave those . . . thanks, H. . . . leave those (articles) near Heard. He (dark man described above) is crabbed and borders on insult. His manner is thoroughly important and commanding. Now after gaining his confidence, sir, you will be O. K. The matron of this institution is also small, dark, but of kindly manner, and is thoroughly innocent of any wrongdoing on the part of Cintz. Yet there are about twenty or thirty inmates altogether. Any questions? I cannot hold him (Heard) long.

Dr. Hodgson: Who pays for his being kept there?

G. P.: Oh there is . . several . . not paying, only as they work.

Dr. Hodgson: They work?

G. P.: Yes, exactly. You will see this when you get there.

Dr. Hodgson: Is he able to be up?

G. P.: Yes, up, and goes about in the building, yet is not allowed to talk much. We have both been inside and can tell you of every inmate there.

Dr. Hodgson: How can Dodge get the confidence of Cintz?

G. P.: By saying I am travelling through the country and would like to visit your institution to make note in my diary for a recollection of my travels, etc., etc. This is the only way you can gain admittance as a visitor.

(Dodge expresses his gratitude to G. P., etc.)

G. P.: No thanks necessary. This is what we are here for, to help our suffering brothers, in your human bodies, etc., etc., again.

Dr. Hodgson: How can he gain the confidence of this matron?

G. P.: Very easily. I will explain. Speak as one in passing the time of night, day, etc. . . . I forget day, H . . . then speak of the Building, etc., then various Ward Rooms, etc. . . . inquire how many inmates, etc. . . . what is the general occupation of same, if any . . . . whether male or female etc., and at the time of each question show no sign of anxiety whatsoever, simply act in a natural manner. Then ask if you may be permitted as a visitor

(which by this time will have been understood) to see the various rooms etc., etc. Then you will have a chance to get your eyes on NUMBER 4. Then you will be convinced. Now comes the "tug of War." Listen. Say not a word to him . . . and in a dazed kind of . . sounds like chair, Hodgson, is apparently trying to paint, . . . not painting exactly but something quite similar. (Hand moves round and round in a small circle, palm downward, a little above the table.) . . . . constantly doing this sort of thing with both his head and hands. There is one small object in this room like a table, bed, chair all.

Dr. Hodgson: All in one?

G. P.: No. I should say beside bed and chair. Now he will look up at you as you enter his room.

Dodge: Will he know me?

G. P.: He staggers forward in a half dazed condition and the most unearthly yell he will utter, then he crouches back into the corner of the room, so to speak, but I should say, den. Then all is well. Yes. Now you will see the place absolutely silent. Go out across the street. Go down about a quarter of a mile, inquire for the gentleman of the clergy, get him on our side, tell him you have been looking for a friend. He will go with you to see Cintz and you have accomplished all you wish, and

you can take Dean home with you. I assure you it is a debt which you owe to us to prove our help: and follow our instructions to the letter. There may be a slight hitch in Cintz name, but it is of little importance otherwise. I command you to follow us. Any questions? Your consul grant (Consul-general?) yes, knows that that body of Welch was not Dean's body.

Dr. Hodgson: He knows it?

G. P.: Yes and did. I never would have insisted upon your having this place opened, only I knew it would be the only proof that I could possibly give of my statement, because they are sharp characters, and it would be useless to try and fight against them because a dead man, so to speak, (Dodge tells) . . hear Heard roar . . . so to speak, has no possible means of defence. Hear you me, US and Co?

(Dodge asks about Minister Ransom, American Minister at the Legation.)

G. P.: He is a SNIC . . . . excuse, H.

Dodge: Dr. Bray. Does he know?

G. P.: Bray, of course he does. I told you so before. Do you not recall it?

Dodge: Yes. I remember it.

G. P.: He is a d—— scoundrel.

Dodge: Did Bray or the Consul or Mrs. Netterburgh get the diamonds and opals?

G. P.: Mrs. N. got them and there is no doubt about it. More, hurry up.

Dr. Hodgson: Puebla?

G. P.: Yes.

Dr. Hodgson: Southern Road?

G. P.: Southern railroad. Yes, sir.

Dr. Hodgson: When you told us Tuxedo before, I suppose you mixed up the sounds of Tuxedo and Puebla.

G. P.: Yes, how in thunder did you know that. I did not tell you because I did not know it myself till Heard told me. The light was so poor I could not hear distinctly . . . . Watch one minute . . . articles etc. . . . Heard says no mistaking the articles. I am sure. Heard smiles in his sleeves. He is confident of success. He says the Mexicans are all devils anyway. Haven't you found that out yet Dodge, old chap?

Dodge: Yes, indeed I have.

G. P.: Did you notice the cynical smile on the consul's face?

Dodge: When he said he paid $60?

G. P.: Yes, also the casket of rough wood.

Dodge: Was Walsh the name of the man who died?

G. P.: Yes, he died, or passed out we say; you call it died. You see he was in the same company with Dean.

Dodge: The same theatrical company?

G. P.: I do say he was — but see later —

and in the same ward in the upper right hand room where they said Dean was.

Dodge: Where Minister Gray died?

G. P.: Yes.

Dodge: Dean was in the fever ward.

G. P.: I told you so. I told you the room and all.

Dodge: Was Walsh in the same theatrical company?

G. P.: Not quite sure about the theatrical company, but in the same company at the hospital.

Dodge: I hope we shall be able to verify your statements.

G. P.: Well, I want this of all things, and I would be willing almost to go back into my own body and have another fall if you will do this for your old friend George Pelham. Any questions about Palmer, anything about —

Dodge: I don't care about him now. I'm looking for Dean. Is Dean's grandmother there?

G. P.: Yes, the old lady whom I saw the other day.

Dodge: Is she his father's mother or his mother's mother?

G. P.: Mother's.

Dodge: Can you tell us her name?

G. P.: I could ask if she were here. I tell you H. Let me see if I can bring her here a moment.

Dr. Hodgson: Well, I'd sooner you'd tell me another time. I want to speak to Mr. D. a moment.

G. P.: Oh, I see. Any other time do as well, Dodge?

Dodge: Yes.

G. P.: Thanks. Any more questions? Did you see his room Dodge?

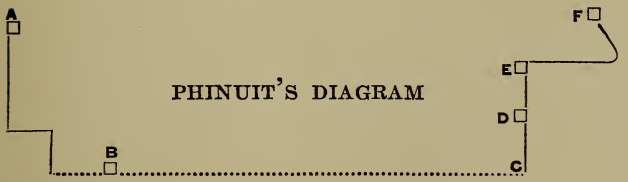
Dodge: In the hospital — yes. I went all through . . . Confused.

G. P.: I should say it was. Strange you could not have seen through it before. Well Dodge, brace up once more, and keep a stiff upper lip and you shall have him yet. Here comes Phinuit.

* * * * * *

(Phinuit talks.)

Phinuit describes the route by which the young man was taken from the hospital to the building where he now is, illustrating by diagram. He started in the evening and arrived the next morning.



PHINUIT'S DIAGRAM

A, Hospital. *B*, Railroad station. *C*, Railroad junction. *D*, Railroad station. *E*, Hillside. *F*, Building where Dean is.

He suggests to Dodge not to go near the hospital, but to start from the next town to the hospital town.

Dodge: Do you go through Tezcoco?

Phinuit: Through there.

Dodge: Matin?

Phinuit: Beyond that.

Dodge: Puebla state or town?

Phinuit: Town too. Name of the city. You find Ariboza.

CHAPTER VIII

Armed with this new "light" Mr. Dodge and Dr. Sparhawk started immediately for the city of Puebla, which they scoured for Dean Bridgman Conner, invoking the aid of the Mexican authorities in the search. Prisons, gaols, asylums, hospitals and public and private institutions were searched. Puebla, which is the capital of the state of Puebla, is a city of about one hundred thousand inhabitants and one of the wealthiest cities in Mexico. No trace of Dean Bridgman Conner, however, could be found in Puebla and Mr. Dodge so telegraphed Dr. Richard Hodgson.

Then Dr. Hodgson held some remarkable "sittings" with Mrs. Piper, as the result of which Mr. Dodge and Dr. Sparhawk were ordered to visit the city of Orizaba about sixty miles east of Puebla, and were there directed in their movements by telegrams from Dr. Hodgson based on the information concerning the exact whereabouts of Dean Bridgman Conner obtained at these "sittings." Mrs. Piper's "controls" claimed they could see Dr. Sparhawk and Mr. Dodge each day and through Mrs. Piper communicated to Dr. Hodgson just what they saw; telling how near

or how far Dr. Sparhawk and Mr. Dodge were each day, or each particular moment, from the building in which Dean Bridgman Conner was confined, and giving exact instructions how to reach the building. Dr. Hodgson directed the search in Orizaba by telegraph, a distance of about four thousand miles.

Was there ever anything just like this?

Dr. Hodgson was naturally a little excited about this time, as well he might be, for here was his great medium displaying a new and more wonderful power than she had ever before displayed — following through her "controls" the movements of two men who were four thousand miles away and directing their movements with the aid of that other mysterious agency, the telegraph. Surely Dr. Hodgson might well imagine himself a modern Prospero with Ariels in abundance ready to do his bidding and bring him information from the remotest corners of the world. The poetic dream of Shakespeare in "The Tempest" had been realized, and if Dean Bridgman Conner could now be found as the result of the information given by Mrs. Piper's "controls" it would be a new revelation to the world which would revolutionize nearly all that had gone before and that had been learned through science and speculation. His struggle of years to wrest from nature her greatest secret would be crowned with

certain victory, based on clear and convincing evidence.

He who had started out as a cold-blooded, scientific investigator of psychic phenomena; the man who had investigated and denounced the fakirs of India; the man who had been anchored to the rock of evolution on which Herbert Spencer stood, had in the course of time and largely because of his study of Mrs. Piper, become a believer in the occult and was confident that through Mrs. Piper he spoke freely with the discarnate spirits of his old friend George Pelham and others, who were now rendering such service as only spirits could possibly render.

It was a crucial moment in the career of this persistent investigator, and a few extracts from "sittings" which he had at this time with Mrs. Piper will reveal a little of the mental excitement under which Dr. Hodgson labored. The conservatism of the scientist still found a place in his mind, however, for he had a witness present at each of these "sittings," probably to make sure that the communications were not figments of the imagination or the hallucinations of an overwrought mind.

In the report of the first of these "sittings," dated November 18, 1896, the "control" John Heard explains that Puebla and Orizaba are so near together it is impossible to define them,

although in point of fact Orizaba is about sixty miles slightly north of east of Puebla.

In this same "sitting" Dr. Hodgson asks the "control," George Pelham, to get some spirits to impress Dodge and direct him to where Dean Bridgman Conner is in Orizaba.

G. P. answers: I assure you Hodgson, old boy, that not a stone will be left unturned by us on this side.

Hodgson says: It would not only be helping Dodge to find Dean, but it would be a most important test.

G. P. answers: I know all. I did not think at first that I should be able to throw any light on this subject in particular, yet I have been much stronger and better able to do so than I ever even hoped for. What are —

Dr. Hodgson: You are progressing, and you're stronger in the light.

G. P.: What is the man doing that is with him?

Dr. H.: With Dodge?

G. P.: Yes.

Dr. H.: He's a friend, a Dr. Sparhawk or some such name. He's with him to help. He knows Dean and will do some detective work.

G. P.: Good.

Dr. H.: Get some of your friends to take Dodge where Dean is. There seems to be nothing more but to influence him.

G. P.: No more. I wish there was. But no.

At a "sitting" the next day when Miss W. was present with Dr. Hodgson the first "control" to appear is Phinuit, to whom Dr. Hodgson reads the following telegram received from Dodge at Orizaba about eleven o'clock the previous evening:

"Prison examined. Hospital tomorrow. Ten Boston time. Telegraph sitting here.

"Dodge."

Phinuit throws no light on the matter nor does he make any comment on the telegram.

G. P. then appears and says: Dean is in that building as sure as you live.

Dr. H.: In what building?

G. P.: Where I have just seen Dodge. Yes in the same building.

Dr. H.: I'll wire him.

G. P.: Dean is in the same building and Scintz also.

On November 20 another "sitting" is held with Mrs. Piper. Dr. Hodgson and Mrs. J. T. C. are present. Phinuit appears and calls for some personal effects of Dodge. He then says:

Dodge is going round and round Dean. He's near the building but not in it. Tell him to go slowly. Dean's in room 4.

Then G. P. writes: I am here Hodgson and I have seen Dodge. He is now on the right

track and if you will give me something I will go to him immediately.

Dr. H.: Are you sure he was in the same building as Dean yesterday?

G. P.: Not inside, but on the sill so to speak.

Dr. H.: Very close to the building?

G. P.: Yes. Exactly.

Dr. H.: But certainly in the same town?

G. P.: Exactly. Yes. I believe it thoroughly to be an asylum.

Dr. H.: A private asylum?

G. P.: Not exactly a private asylum, but . . . . a goodly number of patients there. The similarity to a prison is so great that it is almost impossible to discriminate . . . I will return soon.

Later G. P. writes: I am here Hodgson. I have seen Dean and Dodge both since I was here. I have Dodge in one building and his friend in another. He must wait the result of his friend's investigation. Go through this particular building.

Dr. H.: Where Dodge's friend is?

G. P.: Yes, and is now. There sits poor little Dean. I have seen Dodge and his friend, and his friend goes for him into this building there. Keep right on and go through this building only . . . only, yes —

Dr. H.: He's in that building?

G. P.: Yes. O. K. Same town also.

Dr. H.: I'll wire him today.

G. P.: Good.

Dr. H.: You're sure he's in that building today?

G. P.: Yes. I do say I have seen him.

Dr. H.: Was he in the building yesterday?

G. P.: No, but he was near it. Near it but not in it.

Dr. H.: I wired him yesterday that he was in it.

G. P.: But I fear this was my mistake.

Dr. H.: Near only?

G. P.: Yes, but not exactly in it. He Dean was in the building but not Dodge. O. K. No more.

At the next "sitting" the following day, November 21, Mrs. Louise Chandler Moulton was present with Dr. Hodgson. Phinuit is the first " control " to appear and he asks for articles of Dean and Dodge and says that Dodge has not been in the right building yet. Dean, he says, is in the building close to the hill, which looks like an insane asylum. Then G. P. writes: I wish I could give Dodge a much stronger impression. He is on the right track now, and I am sure he will find out all he wishes. . . . I am here Hodgson and I have told Dodge where to go. No more. We have done our best.

On November 23, G. P. writes: Awfully

glad to see you old fellow. Why in the world does Dodge go fooling around when we have given him such definite directions?

Dr. H.: Isn't he in Orizaba?

G. P.: Yes, but I wish him to go immediately into the building as described.

Dr. H.: Not definitely.

G. P.: It is there directly opposite to the one where we saw him go in.

Dr. H.: Dodge has not been in the building?

G. P.: No. Cintz (?) No . . . the hospital at once. Dean is surely there Hodgson.

Dr. H.: Is the building diagonally across from the hospital?

G. P.: Yes. O. K.

Dr. H.: Are Heard and the others trying to impress Dodge?

G. P.: Yes, and have been for days . . . yes they have. All the power in Heaven is working . . . yes, in a moment (to invisible) speak to me Hodgson —

Dr. H.: All the powers in Heaven —

G. P.: Are working for him.

At the end of the "sitting" G. P. writes:

Now about Dean. He is still there, and I am sure Dodge has been trying to get admission, but up to today has not been successful, yet I do —

Dr. H.: He's got his eye on the building?

G. P.: Here comes John Heard.

Heard writes: Listen a moment Hodgson. He is there sure enough and I think Dodge will get in. Stick to it Dodge and do not let them fool you. He is there.

Dr. H.: Shall I wire that?

Heard: Yes, yes. Stick to it Hodgson. Yes, he is there. Yes, do not let them fool you.

Dr. H.: I will wire: "Stick to it. He is there. Do not be fooled."

Heard: Yes. O. K. Stick to it. Do not be fooled. He is there.

Dr. H.: All right. I'll wire that.

Heard: Yes, at once. I am off Hodgson. I will bang him on the head — Dodge, I mean. O. K.

There were other "sittings" with Mrs. Piper and more telegrams from Dr. Hodgson, and much excitement all around. Mr. Dodge and Dr. Sparhawk examined all the public and private buildings in Orizaba in which it was thought that Dean Bridgman Conner might be incarcerated, but all to no purpose.

They did not get the slightest clue to the young man's whereabouts and so Dr. Sparhawk started for home, leaving Mr. Dodge to pursue his investigations a little farther.

It was a great disappointment to Dr. Hodgson, but he never lost faith in Mrs. Piper or her "controls," although it is possible that he lost some faith in the detective ability of the

searchers, although their deep interest in finding Dean Bridgman Conner could not be disputed.

After Dr. Sparhawk's arrival in Boston he met Dr. Hodgson and both went out to see Mrs. Piper. Then occurred another wonderful "sitting." Mrs. Piper immediately transferred the scene of operations from Orizaba back to the city of Puebla. She described a point on the hill of Guadalupe, outside and to the north of Puebla, from which the hill and building in which Dean Bridgman Conner was confined could be seen by looking across and beyond the city toward a range of snow-capped mountains. It was a vivid and accurate description of the place.

Mr. Dodge came back soon after and in the course of some "sittings" with Mrs. Piper she reiterated her description of the scene and place near Puebla where Dean Bridgman Conner was held in captivity.

CHAPTER IX

My own connection with this strange case began while Mr. Dodge was in Mexico the second time.

In my newspaper experience I had met with some little success in finding people who had "mysteriously disappeared," which was probably the reason why A. A. Fowle, managing editor of the *Boston Globe*, called me into his room one afternoon in November, 1896, and explained what he knew of this case, asking my opinion of it. As Mr. Dodge had been, and was then, the Burlington, Vt., correspondent of the *Globe*, Mr. Fowle naturally knew considerable about his trips to Mexico. Mr. Dodge had, in fact, explained the strange hunt for Dean Bridgman Conner in some detail to Mr. Fowle, but for obvious reasons nothing appeared in the newspapers relative to the matter except a few short, scattering telegrams, somewhat vague, from Mexican correspondents who had heard something of Mr. Dodge's quest in that country.

At first the whole thing was so new and strange to me that I scarcely knew what to think of it. The idea of being guided in a search for a missing man by a medium struck

me as rather novel, if not ludicrous. Yet after looking into the matter further, I became more and more interested in it, especially when I learned more about Mrs. Piper and her standing with eminent scientific investigators of psychic phenomena.

Naturally I was not insensible to the value of such a story as a sensation. What a story it would make if that young man could be found under the clairvoyant guidance of Mrs. Piper and rescued from his enforced captivity! It was certainly worth a try and I made up my mind to undertake it.

In one instance, at least, I had successfully worked out, after the detectives had given the matter up, the case of a woman who had mysteriously disappeared from Boston and who was supposed to be dead. That case did not look nearly as promising at the start as did this case of Dean Bridgman Conner, for in the former case I was left wholly to my own resources, and in this case all I had apparently to do was follow out the instructions of a celebrated and reliable medium. There was something both weird and alluring in the "job." It would mark the beginning of a new era in newspaper and detective work — if successful.

Plainly the first thing to do was find out something clear and definite about this wonderful Mrs. Piper. I had my curiosity aroused

about her a few years previously while reading Paul Bourget's "Outre Mer," in which he described a visit to a celebrated medium in one of the suburbs of Boston. The remarkable powers of this medium very much astonished the French writer and psychologist at the time. He did not mention the name of the medium but I immediately came to the conclusion that this Mrs. Piper was probably the woman, and I subsequently found that she was. Mrs. Piper herself told me about the visit of the Frenchman with Prof. William James to her home.

The first definite move I made in the matter, however, was to visit the rooms of the American Branch of the Society for Psychical Research to have a chat, if possible, with the famous secretary of the society, Dr. Richard Hodgson. It was easy enough to visit the rooms of the society on Boylston Place, but it was another matter to get at Dr. Richard Hodgson. He seemed to be too busy to see me or to grant an interview. I purchased some of the reports of the society and took them home and read over in these reports the wonderful accounts of Mrs. Piper and the phenomena incident to her trance state. My wonder at this remarkable woman increased when I found that she had been the subject of investigation for years by some of the most eminent psychologists in the world, and that a good part of the litera-

ture of the Society for Psychical Research was devoted to her either in the form of specific reports or as speculations on the phenomena presented while she was in the trance state. The Psychical Research Society seemed to have been revolving in a very large measure around this woman. I also found that she was consulted on all sorts of matters by eminent men and women from all over the country.

Here truly was a phenomenon worth seeing. So I called on Mrs. Piper one winter evening at her home on Arlington Heights. I found her a comely, well-built and healthy looking woman of middle age, above the medium height, with brownish hair and a rather good-natured and matronly cast of countenance. She looked like a well-to-do woman without any particularly marked characteristics, either intellectual or otherwise. I had rather expected to find a different type of woman, somebody that would show more evidence of nerves. This woman looked as calm and phlegmatic as a German *Hausfrau.* She evidently never had bothered herself with metaphysical or any other kind of questions of a vague or abstract character. Somehow she reminded me of a nurse I had seen in a hospital at one time — a calm, self-possessed woman.

I asked her how she had discovered her strange powers as a medium, and she told me

that it was while visiting a medium some ten, or it may be twelve, years previously. During that "sitting," she said, she went into a trance herself.

I have seen a report since which states that her first trance experience was while she was ill after the birth of her eldest daughter, when she was sitting in her father-in-law's house at a window late one afternoon. There she had a vision in which she appeared to walk through an atmosphere of silvery, feathery clouds. The next afternoon while sitting in the same place she lost consciousness again and began to talk, not in her natural voice, but in the voice of a strange person, one who was dead. Her father-in-law reported this to Prof. William James of Harvard University, who called on Mrs. Piper and took an immediate interest in the phenomena. The trances would come on each day, whenever she would concentrate her mind for the purpose.

I am very positive she told me her first trance experiences, or rather experience, was in the room of a medium, as above stated. However that may be, soon after she discovered she had this strange power it appears that Prof. William James became interested in her.

I asked her if she remembered anything that transpired while she was in the trance state.

No, she did not, although she had made efforts to remember something of what transpired while coming out of the trance state, but it was all vague and unsatisfactory.

Mrs. Piper was very modest about her own extraordinary powers and could offer no explanation of the phenomena. When asked about the Dean Bridgman Conner case she professed ignorance of the matter, as Dr. Hodgson, she said, did not always let her know who the "sitters" were nor what she said or did at the "sittings." But after a while she seemed to think that she had heard something about the case. I felt at the time that she manifested an ingenuous assumption of ignorance about some things with which it seemed to me she should be somewhat familiar.

I found that Dr. Hodgson when he first became acquainted with Mrs. Piper was a strong disbeliever in her powers. He had detectives put on her track to watch her movements. It wasn't long, however, before he became her staunchest champion and made an arrangement with her by which she became a sort of official medium for the society, and it was difficult to see the woman without a card from him.

She told me that sometimes when walking along the street she felt the trance coming over her, and at such times it took all of her will power to control herself, and that usually she

had to stand still and hold on to something while she diverted her mind.

There was nothing about this woman, when in her normal state at least, that I could see, to arouse even curiosity; nothing mysterious or peculiar in her personal appearance, and nothing unusual in her intellectual resources as far as I could judge from a casual but somewhat definite conversation. She told me that since her illness some months previously, during which an operation of some sort had been performed on her, she had apparently become a much better medium.

I spoke to her about some of Dr. Phinuit's peculiarities and she laughed, remarking that he was a little peculiar at times. This was in response to the suggestion that the French doctor had the reputation of not always telling the truth. She told me somewhat of her family affairs, which were at the time apparently congenial, and she pointed to some oil paintings of flowers on the wall of the little parlor which she seemed to be very much interested in, but which were, as specimens of painting, rather mediocre.

The room in which she gave the trance "sittings" was upstairs, and had been, she said, especially laid out for her work under the supervision of Dr. Hodgson with regard to light, etc. I did not see the room.

Some weeks later I called again at the same house in company with Mr. Dodge for a "sitting." When I arrived at the house Mrs. Piper was in the trance state upstairs. I could hear her moaning at the time, as if she were in agony. Dr. Hodgson was with her. Mr. Dodge went upstairs to prepare the way for me and left me sitting alone in the same little parlor. In a few minutes he returned somewhat excited and said to me:

"The 'controls' want you to leave the house and get as far from it as possible. They say you are a disturbing element and they can do nothing while you are here."

If I was a disturbing element I must have been an unconscious one, for I was just as anxious and sincere in my desire to have a "sitting" with Mrs. Piper as anybody could be, and I may say that, in so far as I know, I was in thorough harmony with the idea of Mrs. Piper's psychic powers. For why should I presume to criticize this woman where so many had passed that stage and had accepted her? It had been determined that I was to go to Mexico, and I was anxious to get all the light I could on the Dean Bridgman Conner case.

But I was obliged to leave or there would have been no business done with the spirits that day. So I boarded an electric car and rode

back to Boston, eight miles away, and I presume the spirits were satisfied.

In the meantime I kept up my reading in the reports of the Society for Psychical Research, and became an associate member of that body. My faith in Mrs. Piper increased daily.

When Mr. Dodge arrived in Boston from Mexico he called on Mr. Fowle, the managing editor, and was introduced to me. He told me what he had done in Mexico, showed me pictures of Dean Bridgman Conner and of the American hospital, explained his suspicions, showed me the stenographic reports of the "sittings" with Mrs. Piper which have been incorporated in preceding chapters, and seemed pleased to think I was to go to Mexico to find and rescue his friend Dean Bridgman Conner. This was some days prior to my last visit to Mrs. Piper's house.

Mr. Dodge, in addition to giving me all the information he possessed, had several "sittings" with Mrs. Piper, during which she reiterated, as has been said, the statement that Dean Bridgman Conner was surely in the vicinity of Puebla. He gave me a description of the locality, made up from Mrs. Piper's writing — a description that seemed so definite and clear it left very little for me to do except go down to Puebla, locate the building in

which the young man was confined and have him released.

To this end I secured the letter which begins this story from the then Secretary of State, Richard Olney.

A strange thing happened at this point, however. I had not been able to secure an interview with Dr. Richard Hodgson. He was always too busy, but he finally found time to write a brief note to the managing editor in which he stated that his "communicators" did not wish me to go to Mexico. They didn't want any newspaper men to mix up in the case. He either did not know or had forgotten that Mr. Dodge was a newspaper man.

This was sad, but it was too late. All arrangements had been perfected for my going, and I had the stenographic reports and the description of the place in which Dean Bridgman Conner was said to be confined outside the city of Puebla. That was all I required. If he was there I would get him — if the medium or her "controls" were correct.

Then again it would be nothing more than a simple act of charity for somebody to go immediately to Mexico, locate the young man, have him released from his enforced captivity, and restore him to his sorrowing parents and friends. Mr. Dodge could not go again and there was no apparently good reason why a

newspaper man could not do the work as well as somebody else. If the medium were correct, the job of finding the young man would be an easy one from a newspaper man's point of view, even though it was in a foreign country. Newspaper men do not usually get such "straight tips" on their assignments.

So a few days after the receipt of Mr. Olney's letter, for which I had been waiting, I started for the City of Mexico, and so confident was I that my trip would be a short one, and a successful one, I took but little baggage. Mr. Dodge urged me to take his revolver, but this I left behind, although several times afterward I wished I had taken it, for I had occasion to go into a much wilder part of the country than any he had visited, where I found it would have been a very good precautionary measure at least to carry some sort of weapon for self-defense.

CHAPTER X

In telling this story of my own experiences during my investigation in Mexico it will be necessary to touch on many things that may seem irrelevant but which in the last analysis will be found to have considerable bearing on all that I did, for somehow when one's mind is directed as mine was to a given purpose, and nothing else occupies the mind, all things and persons seem to contribute something to the work and to the results. Somehow the mind becomes selective under such circumstances, and it was almost startlingly curious how accidental things, and persons met in a most casual or accidental way, all seemed to contribute something to the work in hand. Then again, the variety of knowledge gained and the impressions formed as the work progressed all seemed to tend to a clearer understanding of the problem itself.

And it might be as well to remark here that I have found in my newspaper experience whenever I had a particularly hard problem to solve — one that required complete mental concentration — that the mind became unconsciously selective, so much so that, as Meredith Nicholson once remarked to me about

similar experiences he had had in his own newspaper work — it seemed like a sixth sense.

It must be borne in mind that all these investigations in Mexico were made when President Porfirio Diaz was in power and the entire country had enjoyed an unusual period of tranquillity. Only in remote places, or places distant from organized authority, were there any particular dangers to be encountered by the traveller.

I left Boston early in January, 1897, and I went by rail all the way to the City of Mexico. The train was chased by a severe snowstorm as far south as Atlanta, and even New Orleans was in the grip of the "Ice King" to such an extent that relief measures were being taken in the interests of the negroes and the poorer classes who were unprepared for such an unwelcome visitor. To a person from the North the measures seemed a little peculiar, but it was serious business to these people. After a day spent in New Orleans the train was taken for Eagle Pass, Texas, on the Rio Grande. The air was salubrious in Texas, the prairies were green, the trees were in bloom, and glimpses were had occasionally of the blue Gulf of Mexico.

These long "runs" by rail are not unlike a sea voyage in one respect: they seem to bring together total strangers in a sort of temporary

companionship which very often results in a friendship more lasting.

Travelling in the same Pullman with me were a number of people of widely divergent interests and characteristics. There were two brothers who were each over six feet tall and who were large in proportion, farmers from northern New York, with their wives and a daughter who was a school teacher. They were on their way to southern California to see a relative. One of these brothers was the most inquisitive mortal I ever met. He plumped all sorts of questions at you in a most direct and embarrassing manner — who you were, where you came from, where you were going, whether married or single, what business you were in, what you intended doing in the place you were going to, etc., etc. But I never saw such tenderness toward women as he manifested toward his wife and daughter. His curiosity was such a natural thing that it only provoked smiles. The other brother was a great, happy, easy-going man who seemed to be inclined to take things as they came. He would smoke a cigar, tell a story, and laugh heartily at his own and everybody else's jokes. The daughter was a bright, intelligent young woman, whose principal regret seemed to be that she did not bring her "wheel" along with her. Before we parted at Spofford, Texas, I had a very pressing

invitation to visit a village in northern New York, which I regret to say I have not done.

There was also on the car a little red-faced and red-haired man who had seen a great deal of the world and who had had many thrilling experiences in foreign lands. He was an agent for a locomotive firm in Pennsylvania and was on his way to Mexico to "clinch" a contract. He had been in Russia, where he sold engines to the government, and he had travelled over much of that vast empire. He had also been in China and Japan and in several South American countries. At one time he was about to be hanged in Brazil because of an accident to one of his engines which resulted in the death of several natives. Had it not been for the persistent efforts of the British consul in his behalf at the time he said there was no doubt but he would have been hanged. That was before the Spanish War, when the United States was rated rather low in South America. He was full of good stories.

Then there was a big, stout man from New Orleans who was selling sugar machinery. He knew every sugar plantation in Louisiana, Texas, Mexico and the West Indies. He, too, had had some thrilling experiences. Judging from his conversation, he could sell anything. He had a splendid opinion of his own abilities. Time and again he showed us a picture of

"the dearest little woman on earth" — his wife — which he had pasted on the inside of his gold watch. He said she was the star to which his wandering compass "ever pointed true."

This brings me to one man on the train whose acquaintance proved to be of much value in my subsequent investigations into the case of Dean Bridgman Conner. He was a tall man, reserved and quiet, with keen, brown eyes and a bare suspicion of a smile whenever a good story was told in the smoking compartment. He said very little for several days and even the inquisitive farmer was balked in his attempts to find out anything about the man whose dignity and reserve rather overawed the inquisitor.

After we had crossed the Rio Grande and were driving along toward Torreon I asked this quiet man some questions about the country, which, in fact, at that point was nothing more than a yellow clay desert dotted with scrub mesquite — a hardy bush that grows in this part of Mexico. He knew Mexico thoroughly and gave me all the information I desired. He knew that I came from Boston and he asked some questions about that city. Finally he said he was going to ask me a foolish question. He said:

"I've got a first cousin in Boston whom I've

never seen. I was brought up in the West and he has always lived in the East. I wonder if you ever heard of him. His name is Robert P. Boss and he works on a newspaper, I understand. I think the name of it is the *Boston Globe.*"

Nobody on that train knew that I worked on the *Boston Globe.* I had carefully avoided all reference to that fact. Indeed, to all intents and purposes, I was merely a tourist for the time being.

I had known Robert P. Boss for many years. He was the superintendent of the *Globe* composing room and his first cousin in Mexico was both astonished and pleased when I so informed him. My companion I afterwards learned was a mine owner in Mexico, with business offices in the City of Mexico and in San Francisco. He resided most of his time in the City of Mexico. His name was Thomas Boss. Naturally we became more intimate after this and I found him a very agreeable and well-informed man.

He was going to stop over at Zacatecas for a few days to examine a gold mine he had recently purchased. Zacatecas was then the mining center of Mexico. Its silver mines especially have been famous for hundreds of years. Out of these rich mines came much of the wealth which gave Spain her early prestige

in the world. It is high up on the plateau, some eight thousand feet, in a mountainous district.

It was rather cold the night we approached the city of Zacatecas where we were due at one o'clock in the morning. I sat up with Mr. Boss to see him off the train. After the other passengers had retired and the two of us were alone in the smoking compartment I frankly told him what my mission was in Mexico and asked his opinion of the entire matter. I felt that this man who had travelled for years all over Mexico and who knew the country and the people so well could give me some sane advice. He was the first person to whom I had mentioned the matter since I left Boston.

After I had told him the story in all its details and explained what I knew of Mrs. Piper, he sat for some little time apparently in deep thought. Then he said:

"When I was a young man in Virginia City, Nevada, in the mining business, I visited a sêance hall there one Sunday afternoon. I had arrived in the city the previous evening and I only knew a couple of men in the whole place. I was wandering about the streets rather aimlessly when I happened to see a sign at the door of this hall advertising the séance. I went in and took a seat in the rear of the little hall. There was a woman on the platform, the medium, and soon after I entered

she pointed at me and said that she saw the figure of a man hovering over my head and she gave a perfect description of my father. I was astonished. I couldn't understand it, for I was certain that that woman never saw me before and she certainly could not have known who my father was, as he was dead.

"Well, I pondered over that for a long time. It bothered me. Some time after that I was in Los Angeles, California, and I attended a séance there. These séances were common through the West, especially in the mining country in those days. Well, sir, what was my astonishment when this medium pointed at me almost as soon as I had taken my seat and she also described, very accurately, my father. I could not account for it and I thought over the matter a great deal, until finally it dawned on me that both of these women had described my father as I had known him, and not as he appeared when he died. I had not seen my father for about ten years prior to his death, and during that time I learned that he had changed a great deal in his whole appearance, owing to a very severe illness. From what I learned later he had changed so much that I would not have known him. Now those women in some way, while in the trance state, saw the picture of my father which I had in my mind. They were clever mind readers and that is

about as far, I think, as any of these people can go."

I told him of the eminent men who had investigated the Piper phenomena but he could not be shaken in his belief. He said:

"You'll find if you pursue the matter far enough, there's mind reading in it somewhere.

"Now," he continued in a very serious tone, "I'm a trustee of the American hospital in the City of Mexico. We Americans are rather proud of that hospital. We have put a good deal of money into it. It is supported by the English-speaking residents of the City of Mexico and we think it is as fine a hospital as there is in the country. If there is anything wrong in the conduct of the hospital we want to know it as much as anybody. I will help you in any way that I can in your investigations of the hospital, but I think you will find that somebody is making a great mistake. However, don't let my opinion interfere with your work. I should like to know the exact truth of the matter. It seems to me I once before heard something of this case, but at the time I guess I did not regard it very seriously."

Soon after this conversation I parted with Mr. Boss at Zacatecas and retired for the night, but I did not go to sleep immediately. What he had said bothered me. It was a "new point of view." But he had brought the

American hospital in the City of Mexico out of the clouds of my imagination and made it something real and serious. However, I could not see where the mind reading came in. My enthusiasm over Mrs. Piper was too great to put her on a plane with ordinary mining-camp mediums. I finally came to the conclusion that if Mr. Boss knew more about Mrs. Piper he would not be so strong in his opinions about mind reading. So, having thus settled the matter temporarily in my own mind, I went to sleep.

CHAPTER XI

As the train pushed farther south the air grew balmier on the great Mexican plateau. In less than a week I had been whirled from the dull, snow-clad and leafless North into a land of perpetual sunshine, with scarcely a single cloud to be seen anywhere in the blue sky. It was only a few days from the land of the long overcoat, heavy shoes and thick gloves to this wonderful country where many of the brown-skinned children were almost nude as they crowded the little stations and asked for "centavos." The nights were pleasantly cool and as the City of Mexico was approached the adobe towns became thicker, also the natives at the stations, and the land became more and more fertile until it looked like a vast green garden with an abundance of flowers and fruits, among which were delicious oranges, bananas and sweet lemons.

It must be a land of opals, too, for at every station the natives seemed to have them in abundance to sell. Dean Bridgman Conner had a weakness for these stones and I rather admired his taste for I know of no stone so rich in color and light possibilities as the opal. I developed a weakness for them myself.

The pure natives are rather picturesque and somehow my first and last impression of them was based on a "typical" picture of a Malay I had seen in my school geography. I fancy, however, that my ethnological discovery, based on this picture, is probably not worth much from a scientific standpoint. But they were very picturesque, these men with the big sombreros and zerapes and the women with the varicolored shawls over their heads, and the children who were dressed — well, some with little and some with a little more clothes.

The pervasive Chinamen were in evidence at many of the railroad stations, where they ran the restaurants, and served very good food, by the way. At these stations were also to be seen one or more of the famous "Rurales" at "present arms," whenever the train stopped. This was the crack cavalry regiment of Mexico. Most of its members were said to have been at one time bandits, but President Diaz induced them to enter the army. They are wonderful horsemen, but how they ever got into those skin-tight trousers was a mystery to me.

Higher and higher the train ascended the plateau until a point was reached where some of the passengers began to bleed at the nose. The descent was more or less gradual from this point until the City of Mexico was reached at an elevation of 7434 feet. The longest part of

the railroad ride was ended, and I decided to spend a couple of days in the City of Mexico before resuming my journey to Puebla. I did this to accustom myself to the peculiarities of the country, to the positive light, the strange sights and sounds, and the characteristics of the people. So I went to the Hotel Iturbide with a young man from Columbus, Ohio, with whom I had become acquainted on the train. He knew the city pretty thoroughly, having been there on business several times previously.

I did not care particularly to know anything about the city. I just wanted to walk here and there and familiarize myself with the general aspect of things — immerse myself in the life around me. At the time I did not suppose I would have occasion to get any further acquainted with the City of Mexico. I had a definite object in view and it was my desire to accomplish this object and get out of the country as quickly as possible. My work was in and around the city of Puebla. That was the city I was most deeply concerned about and I did not care to waste any energy in storing away facts about the City of Mexico. So I strolled around for a couple of days in the city, wherever my fancy led me.

There is always a certain confusion of the senses when a traveller enters a foreign city — or even a large city in one's own country for

the first time. This confusion was more pronounced the first day I spent in the City of Mexico than I had ever noticed it before in my travels. Everything seemed new and strange. The clear blue sky, the intense sunlight in the middle of the day, the architecture, the costumes and the street sounds. However, the feeling, as I had anticipated, wore off inside of forty-eight hours and I became pretty thoroughly adjusted to my environment and felt "more at home," as it were — that is, to external conditions.

There were plenty of Americans on the main thoroughfares of the city, as there were Englishmen, Frenchmen and Germans; in fact, there were fairly large colonies of these different nationalities in the city. The difference in size between the people of these nationalities and the natives is most striking. The natives are, as a rule, short in stature, and the men are not blessed with too much adipose tissue, as a general thing. Nearly all of the Americans I met were big, tall men, most of them from the western and southern states.

I did not care to look up the American hospital during these two days, nor did I visit either the American Legation or the American Consulate. I spent both of the evenings on the Plaza Mayer listening to the wonderful military band and watching the crowds of people

that stood or walked leisurely around while they listened to the splendid music. Mexicans have a fine musical taste and they like to hear the best music there is. This band played selections from nearly all the great operas.

After thus resting myself for two days and two nights, I took the train on a Sunday morning and started for the city of Puebla to begin my search for Dean Bridgman Conner.

CHAPTER XII

It was a delightful trip by rail from the City of Mexico to the city of Puebla. The sky was clear and in the early forenoon the sun seemed to shine through a golden haze. The foliage was tinted with the freshest of greens and the distant mountains faded away in a delicate cobalt. A Sabbath quiet seemed to pervade all things — a quiet which was only broken, when the train stopped at the little stations, by the deep tones of the church bells. If the ringing of church bells is any indication of religious sentiment among a people, then the Mexicans must be deeply religious, for there seems to be little cessation in these calls to religious service during the Sabbath from early morning until after dark. In the larger cities like Puebla and the City of Mexico where there are a number of churches it seems to be one continual "clang-clang" of bells all through the day.

The country seemed like a vast garden and everywhere could be seen the great maguey plant, a species of cactus from which pulque, the national drink, is extracted. To the south-east Mt. Popocatepetl reared its snow-white cone over 17,000 feet into the golden haze

of the distance. Near by is the jagged and snow-crowned Iztaccihuatl, a forbidding looking mountain, but not as high as Popocatepetl. The latter seems to dominate everything in this Mexican valley and it becomes more and more impressive as you approach it. It is almost a perfect cone from base to summit. No matter which way you turn you always seem to be conscious of this mountain. It is grand and majestic at all times and it must be to the Mexicans what Fujiyama is to the Japanese, a sort of crowning glory of their land. It is no wonder that the ancient Mexicans, in the days when this mountain was an active volcano, and its summit was crowned with fire and smoke, offered up sacrifices to the fire god who was supposed to reside in it.

Nearer and nearer we approached this mountain until finally the train stopped at Ammeccamecca. This is the nearest railroad station to Mt. Popocatepetl and the point from which tourists who wish to climb the mountain usually start. From this point also a branch railroad runs to the city of Puebla while the main line runs to Orizaba and Vera Cruz. It was a short run from this point to Puebla, where I found an epidemic of smallpox was carrying off the peons at the rate of from twenty-five to fifty or so a day. Nobody seemed to mind this, however, and I found

as I drove across the city to the Hotel Jardin that the plaza was crowded with people who were enjoying a very fine military band concert, apparently indifferent to epidemics of any kind. These smallpox epidemics in Mexican cities seem to be confined to the lowest and dirtiest class of the natives, who swarm in some sections of the larger cities.

After registering at the hotel and partaking of a light lunch I proceeded to get a little confidential with the hotel clerk — a Frenchman who could talk very good English. He had anticipated me to a certain extent. Of course I wanted to see the city and he introduced me on the spot to a young man who was anxious to guide me and who was just a little better acquainted with the English language than I was with Spanish, which was saying very little for his knowledge of English. I told him in the presence of the clerk that I wanted to go to the plaza first and from there I wanted to take a walk across the city to the Zaragoza bridge, then through the park to the Zaragoza statue.

Both the clerk and the guide seemed a little surprised at my knowing so well where I wanted to go. Before I started I went to my room and took from my bag several of the reports of the Piper "sittings." The one which I was most particular about contained the

results of the latest "sittings" which Mr. Dodge had had with Mrs. Piper. This contained a description of the view to be had from the Zaragoza statue, or monument, and from which could be seen the hill in the valley on top of which was the building in which, according to Mrs. Piper, Dean Bridgman Conner was said to be confined. It was the key to the whole problem, and read as follows:

"The building in which Dean B. Conner is said to be kept is in or near Puebla, Mexico. It is said to lie in a southeasterly direction from the city, and within a few miles, though this last may not be so correct.

"At a recent 'sitting' with Mrs. Piper she directed that, having crossed the river over which is the Zaragoza bridge, you turn into the park opposite the military hospital, go through the park to the Zaragoza statue (not around the horse's head) and on to the hill back of the horse. When well up on the hill, even with the horse's back — possibly further — turn your back to the city, then, turning slowly to the left and looking over it (the city) you will see the building which lies on a small hill in a valley between the range of snow-capped mountains and a smaller range nearer in the foreground. The approach to the building is said to lie between four other buildings, there being five in all, and unless

the exact spot on the hill back of the statue is found, it cannot be seen between the distant hills. It may require a field glass, probably does, to see it from this hill on which you stand. Mrs. Piper said for one to take a glass; also, unless one did strike the exact spot on the hill, he might hunt for years without seeing it. So be very careful. (You had better 'sit' with her on this and take careful notes.)

"Between the city and the building almost daily goes a team consisting of a large gray horse (or mule), drawing a four-wheeled covered wagon, and evidently near the seat are the words 'Americano Mexicano Express.' The man driving the team is evidently a native (see Wells Fargo manager, who speaks English), although it may now have no connection with any other express — may be a wagon purchased from former express man.

"In reports read 'Zaragoza' for 'Ariboza.' The name may not — and may be — over the door of the building. Think Mrs. Piper got name of stream from off the bridge in Puebla.

"Mrs. Piper says that there are two trees in front of the building, one is healthy while the other is decaying and has grown scraggly."

It was about four o'clock in the afternoon when we reached the plaza and the band concert was over. From this point we started

for the Zaragoza bridge about half a mile away. Sure enough, we came to the bridge, over the center arch of which, carved in the stone, were the words: "Zaragoza, May 5, 1862." It spanned the Acoyata river. Then came the park with its tall trees and the military barracks and hospital on one side. After a short turn to the north we came in sight of the Zaragoza equestrian monument situated near the base of a gently sloping hill. The bronze group is mounted on a granite pedestal and surrounded by an iron railing.

So far everything was essentially as described by Mrs. Piper. Behind the monument and to the right of the approach was the palace of General Cervantes, the then resident general of the military forces in Puebla, and near by were the ruins of an old monastery. Crowning the top of the hill was the famous fortress of Guadalupe, also gone to decay.

Here, then, was the statue, or rather monument, which I had travelled so far to see and on which so much depended. And here was the hill which Mrs. Piper so accurately described. My Mexican guide chattered away in broken Spanish, for it had little semblance of English, but I paid no attention to him. I slowly climbed the hill around the rear of the monument, according to directions, until I was on a level with the horse's back and

could see over it. I then slowly turned on my heels to the left and looked over the horse's back and across the city to the range of snow-capped mountains in the distance. There the mountains stood — possibly twenty miles away — the farthest range. First came Popocatepetl and just beyond on the same line Iztaccihuatl, both snow-capped and looming up majestically against the sky like grim sentinels guarding the approaches to the City of Mexico. There could be no mistaking that snow-capped range. It is a sight one does not soon forget. In front of this great range could be seen a much lower mountain range, and in front of this latter range was a valley, the Cholula valley, out of which clearly rose an apparently isolated hill, on the top of which could be seen a white spot which looked like a building, or a group of buildings. It was impossible with the naked eye to tell which, as the hill was about seven or eight miles away, though, owing to the rarefied atmosphere, apparently much nearer.

In front of this hill and nearer the city was another, the hill of San Juan, then came the white city of Puebla with its great towered and domed cathedral and many other churches, and finally the monument in the immediate foreground.

The scene spread out before me answered

Mrs. Piper's description perfectly, from this point. I gazed and gazed on it and read over the description several times to make sure that I was not dreaming; for, although I had expected it, yet I somehow had a peculiar feeling when I stood behind that statue and looked across the city and valley to the snow-capped range of mountains, that there was something unreal about it all. The nervous tension became more and more acute as I looked at the little hill with the white speck on top of it which rose out of the Cholula valley. That surely must be the hill and that white speck the building in which Dean Bridgman Conner was confined. The scene seemed to burn itself into my brain and it became more and more picturesque and impressive as the sun passed behind the great snow-capped mountain range.

I marvelled over the fact that Mrs. Piper could have described this scene when she was some four thousand miles away. Yet somehow I had felt all the time that I should find the place and the scene exactly as she described them. And now I felt that as she was clearly right up to this point there could be no doubt about the rest. It ought not to be a very difficult task to go to that building on top of the little hill in the valley and rescue the young man who was said to be confined

there, especially when I had the power of the United States Government behind me if I found it necessary to use it.

My guide couldn't tell me anything of the country beyond the city, at least I couldn't understand him, but I found out later that it was all historic ground and that the hill of Guadalupe on which I was standing was sacred ground to the people of the Republic of Mexico by reason of the fact that here the Mexican army, under General Zaragoza, had defeated the French army on May 5, 1862, and had driven the latter from the fortress which crowned the top of the hill. When the republic was established the fifth of May became a national holiday and General Zaragoza a national hero, for he dealt the first severe blow to Maximilian and his French troops. Diaz was one of his captains of cavalry at the time. He stormed the little hill of San Juan beyond the city of Puebla and captured it on the same day.

It was during the visit of Mr. Dodge and Dr. Sparhawk to the city of Puebla the preceding November that the monument to General Zaragoza had been unveiled and dedicated and the city given up to a three days' fête at the time. President Diaz came down from the capital with 20,000 troops to help make the event memorable, and during

the entire three days the city of Puebla was given over to such rejoicing as it had never witnessed before. That event and the preparations leading up to it made a deep impression on all who saw them. I did not know until I returned from Mexico that either Mr. Dodge or Dr. Sparhawk had seen this Zaragoza monument or been present in the city during the dedicatory exercises.

That was all for that day. I returned to the hotel and did a lot of planning that evening for the morrow. I determined to make an early start and reconnoiter the distant valley from the hill of San Juan which was to the southwest and almost directly across the city from the Zaragoza monument and in a direct line with the little hill in the valley beyond. It was an anxious night and I slept but little. That little was all mixed up in a curious dream-medley with snow-capped mountains, hills and valleys, strange buildings and strange people.

CHAPTER XIII

The next morning the young Mexican called at my room by seven o'clock and we started in a carriage before breakfast for the hill of San Juan from which a clearer view of the hill in the Cholula valley could be obtained than was possible from behind the Zaragoza statue on the hill of Guadalupe on the other side of the city. From this point I made a topographical study of the country and of the Cholula valley to the base of the mountains. Beyond the little hill could be seen the village of Cholula.

I returned to the hotel from this brief study of the valley and after breakfast started alone for the village of Cholula on the little "bob tail" horse car which I found ran between the plaza in Puebla and the village. It was a pretty rough bit of street railroad. I kept that little hill in the valley constantly in view and as I approached it I noticed that there were two other hills, apparently very close to this one, both smaller than the first, however, and covered with foliage.

Finally the car drew up close to these hills at the edge of Cholula village. A steam railroad passes between the larger hill and the

two smaller ones. The larger hill was covered with a thick growth of foliage, but on the summit was an immense cathedral with two Moorish towers and a cupola. This proved to be the ancient cathedral of Los Remedios. The ascent to this cathedral was by means of a zigzag path and a long flight of steps.

This is one of the oldest cathedrals in Mexico, and it is open to all. It was in charge of a native and his wife, and they with their little children lived in a portion of a wing of the building. A part of their revenue was derived from the sale of photographs of the altar, and of other souvenirs. The clergymen lived in the village near by. The cathedral is historic, and is kept open for pilgrims and visitors. It is regarded as of much traditional and spiritual importance to the natives, and no wonder, for on this hill, which turned out to be an immense pyramid, the Aztec and the Christian religions are irrevocably blended. This pyramid is known as Pyramid La Grande, the largest structure of the kind on the American continent and larger than any pyramid in Egypt. The two smaller hills proved also to be pyramids — Acosac and La Cruz. But there were no buildings on either of these pyramids.

It is needless to say there was no Dean Bridgman Conner within the sacred precincts of the cathedral, nor any such person as Dr.

Cintz. No such persons would be tolerated in the building, as far as living there was concerned, for the natives are extremely jealous of their places of worship. A place of worship is sacred ground to them in no ordinary sense. It would be considered sacrilege to keep such a person as Dean Bridgman Conner in the place. Yet this was the only building on a distinct eminence in the vicinity.

It was in a sense a great shock to me, for since so much that Mrs. Piper had said had been proven true I had keen hopes of finding on this hill such a building as she described, and also of locating therein Dean Bridgman Conner. Still, it would be expecting a good deal to find the young man so quickly. Yet I was dazed for the moment after being shown about the cathedral by the native woman, and after I went out I stood for a long time in silence looking over the immense wall which surrounded the paved plaza on the top of the pyramid, and revolving in my mind what course to pursue next.

The wind blew a gale up there, and the clouds of dust whirled through the village on which I looked down. The cathedral towers loomed high over me and the cupola with its richly glazed tiles from Tininnitzla, near by, glistened in the clear light. The only human being in sight, after parting with the native woman

inside the cathedral, was a horseman going at a breakneck pace over one of the roads after a runaway horse. My interest in that horseman took my thoughts from Dean Bridgman Conner and Mrs. Piper for the moment and led me to an inspection of the surrounding country as well as a closer inspection of this remarkable pyramid and the cathedral on its summit.

And whereas under ordinary circumstances this pyramid might be very impressive, it really seems insignificant because of the fact that the hoary Mt. Popocatepetl seems to loom directly over it more than 17,000 feet. That immense, snow-capped cone makes all other things in the vicinity seem insignificant. The pyramids of Egypt would lose their impressiveness in the presence of this mountain.

I had learned from a boy who accosted me in fairly good English when I left the car the names of the pyramids and the cathedral. This boy wanted to accompany me as a guide, but I wished to go alone to the cathedral, so after extracting a little information I paid him a few centavos and ascended the pyramid.

What the boy told me at the moment did not make much of an impression on me, but now it all began to dawn on me from a new point of view. I remembered my Prescott's History of Mexico in a dim sort of way. I

remembered this Cholula. The pyramid on which I stood must be the great teocalli which he described so vividly, on top of which the Aztec priests offered their human sacrifices to the fire god in Popocatepetl, which seems to loom directly over the village and pyramid. That is what the people in the vicinity of Cholula say — the sacrifices were to the fire god — but Prescott says the pyramid was built to the god Quetzalcoatl, who is said to have taught the inhabitants of the country the arts of Toltec civilization. The pyramid is said to be 170 feet high and 1420 feet long at the base — what is left of it.

The city of Cholula, when the Spaniards visited it in 1519, was the Mecca of the religions of Mexico. Here all the sects had their shrines and offered up their human sacrifices — as many as six thousand annually, it is said. But this Pyramid La Grande towered over all the others; it was the great Aztec pyramid where the priests from the City of Mexico held their services, and here, after the terrible massacre by the Spaniards and Tlascalans under Cortes in the city of Cholula, the priests held out and, rather than yield, flung themselves from the battlements of their temple on the summit to certain death.

On the site of this temple, after the great image of the mystic, ebon-featured deity had

been destroyed, the Spaniards erected a huge cross, and later this cathedral, to prove that the church erected on the very pinnacle of the Aztec religion was the church triumphant. This spot was sacred to every traditional instinct of the native. It stood revealed through sanguinary conflict towering over the ruins of the pagan religion.

It was certainly a strange place in which to find one's self at the end of the nineteenth century on such a quest as mine. For behind this quest were the latest results of scientific investigation along the lines of psychical research, from which it was hoped to at least shed some light on the mystery of death and the life hereafter. Practically the meaning of this psychical research was the solving of the same problem which had caused men in the dim past to rear this vast pyramid out of primitive bricks and mortar with infinite labor to the mystery which surrounds death, and here the Spaniards had likewise erected and dedicated in a sea of pagan blood their church to "the Prince of Peace," in whom their hope of a future life lay. And here, all unconscious of these things, I had come in an effort to prove the latest and apparently the most scientific explanation of what after all was simply the same old puzzle in a new form.

It was a strange place to have drifted to

in this quest, for it must be borne in mind that the finding of Dean Bridgman Conner, important as that was, was in a sense incidental to the proving of the truth of Mrs. Piper's remarkable trance statements. If she were right, then here was at least hope that a new secret had been wrested from nature which might lead to a complete revolution in the entire attitude of mankind toward religion and death.

The people engaged in this psychical research have hoped — and much of their work has been of undoubted importance — to broaden the entire scope of human intelligence by solving the great riddle of the hereafter. They are loath to express themselves in this way for fear it might not appear scientific, but stripped down to the bone, that is what it means, and it is undoubtedly a great undertaking — it is one of the problems of the ages which has thus far eluded science.

Looking out over this valley and at the great mountain which towered toward the skies, and at the tottering old ruin of a village which was at one time the populous and sacred city of Anáhuac, there was plenty of play for the imagination. But that steam railroad running through the valley was a reminder of the material present, as was the little mule car which was disappearing in the

distance toward the city of Puebla, which the Spaniards had founded, and which had become a great and populous city while Cholula had gone to ruin and decay.

But what of Dean Bridgman Conner? Was he alive or dead? Where was he? This was the immediate question for me to solve. But how? What was to be done next? I made a study of the valley and noticed that many of the larger buildings — the haciendas — were built on rises of ground, none of them, however, anything in size like the pyramid on which I stood. I made some topographical sketches of the valley to enable me to pursue my investigations with some knowledge of the general drift of the land. Then I decided to explore the village of Cholula. So I descended from the cathedral and then noticed that the great pyramid was built in a series of terraces. I entered the little steam railroad station near by to learn something about the trains to Puebla and found I had plenty of time to explore the village. In the little station I found a boy who had charge of the place and the telegraph. He, too, could speak a little English, and when I entered he was patiently writing out Spanish words on a large sheet of paper, with the English equivalents. He told me something further about the great cathedral and gave me some idea of the village.

So I started on my exploring tour, which did not result in anything, and after a couple of hours I returned to the little station and helped the boy in his work of translating. This pleased him immensely and he insisted on bringing his father up from the village to meet me. When I left my new acquaintances urged me to call again and visit them. The father could not speak a word of English but he could smile at everything and he smoked cigarettes continuously. He was evidently proud of his boy, who appeared to be a very bright little fellow.

I was satisfied when I left on the train that there was nothing in Cholula which I wanted, but I satisfied myself more fully later through a peculiar source — another one of those lucky accidents that befell me during my quest.

It was after nine o'clock that night when I got back to Puebla, and I was hungry. The landlord of the Hotel Jardin very kindly had supper prepared for me.

Thus ended the first day of my search in Puebla and Cholula for Dean Bridgman Conner. I went to bed that night disappointed and in a confused state of mind. But I was tired, and I slept soundly.

CHAPTER XIV

I awoke early the next morning with a queer feeling of uncertainty and a rather painful impression that something was wrong and that both my plans and my hopes had been in a measure shattered through my experience of the previous day at Pyramid La Grande and in Cholula.

For the first time a doubt crept into my mind that perhaps Mrs. Piper was mistaken. But I was too much under the spell of a hitherto unshaken confidence in her to give the doubt much more than a passing and momentary consideration. She could not be wrong! Because if she were wrong Dr. Hodgson must also be wrong, and all the great men who had investigated her must be wrong, although they had nothing directly to do with this case. Yet, indirectly I felt they had much to do with it, as their confidence in her was in a large measure the basis of my confidence.

No, Mrs. Piper could not be wrong. Yet in spite of this deduction, the problem did not look as simple or tangible as it had looked up to this moment. It is true that everything had turned out much as Mrs. Piper had outlined. There was the bridge with the word "Zaragoza" cut in the keystone. There was

the statue — horse and rider — as she had described; and there was that wonderful scene looking over the city and across the valley to the range of snow-capped mountains. And there — there in that valley was the hill, and on top of it was a building as she had described. And it was the only hill in that valley — looking in the direction indicated — that could be seen from behind the statue of General Zaragoza.

As I lay there in bed I saw it all vividly again. Everything was just as she had described — everything! — except that the cathedral of Los Remedios did not answer the vague description of a building such as she had given, and it certainly was no such institution as she had described, and consequently there was no Dr. Cintz, and naturally there was no Dean Bridgman Conner in the building. But after all it would be expecting a great deal — too much, perhaps — to find him the very first day of the search. I had about consoled myself with this reflection when there was a knock at my door, and it rather startled me, for it was only a few minutes past six o'clock.

I jumped out of bed, unlocked the door, and there stood the young Mexican guide, with a broad grin on his face. I told him to wait for me in the patio and I hurriedly dressed. He had come thus early, I later learned,

because he worked in the bank on the plaza and had to be on duty at nine o'clock. So he thought he might earn an honest dollar before he went to work by escorting me once more about the city. And I wanted him for just that purpose, or rather to take me once more to the statue of General Zaragoza.

So after a light breakfast we started for the hill of Guadalupe and the statue, which by this time had become fixed in my consciousness as a sort of focal point around which my work in Puebla and vicinity must revolve.

It was a sunshiny and altogether a beautiful morning, and so crystal clear was the atmosphere that it was possible to see a long distance. I studied the distant valley once more, up and down, along the base of the mountain range which runs from Popocatepetl slightly to the northeast. I noticed a number of villages and slight rises of ground here and there on which were buildings and churches, but that Pyramid La Grande was the most promising hill in the valley so far as Mrs. Piper's description was concerned, and in fact the only hill which fully fitted the description she had given.

After our return to the hotel I decided to use a letter of introduction, which Mr. Dodge had given me, to Dr. Carl Osterheld, a young American physician, graduate of the Columbia

Medical School, who had been practising in Puebla for several years. He first went down to Puebla for his health, and decided to settle there for a time. To him and to his wife, Mrs. Hettie Faber Osterheld, I am indebted for many courtesies during my stay in Puebla, and for many courtesies since that time in their home at Yonkers in New York State.

The doctor was very busy that day, for the epidemic of smallpox taxed the time and energy of all the physicians in the city. So I returned to the plaza and hunted up a book-store. Here I purchased a map of the city of Puebla and its immediate environs. I took this map to my room and began to study it over carefully. As a specimen of map making it surprised me because of the excellent workmanship and the evident scientific care which had been taken in its compilation. Every village and even hacienda in that Cholula valley was carefully given with the names of the haciendas, distances, etc. That map aided me much in my subsequent work in and around Puebla.

After several hours of study of this map in my room, I went down to the patio of the hotel and seated myself in an easy chair to think matters over. Seated near me in another chair was a Roman Catholic priest whom I had noticed in the hotel at breakfast that

morning. He was evidently not a Mexican. He was a large man of florid complexion. I was rather surprised when he spoke to me in excellent English, asking me what I thought of the city. Then followed an interesting conversation of several hours, and I trust, if the reverend gentleman is alive, that he will forgive me if I break a little personal confidence so as to make more clear certain things about Puebla and Cholula in connection with my hunt for Dean Bridgman Conner.

In the first place, the priest was born in France, but came to the United States when a boy and studied for the priesthood at Baltimore, where he was ordained. After a short time in that diocese he was transferred to Texas, where he lived among the cowboys. He laughingly told me that the cowboys would do anything for him if he would not talk religion to them. He had lived with them on the plains and he carried a broken wrist which he said bore testimony to his clumsiness while lassoing a steer.

The same causes which led to his transfer to Texas led to his transfer to Puebla some three years previous to our conversation. I judged from some of his observations that he was not always wholly amenable to the strict discipline of the priesthood. However, he was a philosopher and he smiled over his mis-

fortunes. But he loved the United States and had hopes of getting back there some day. Whether he ever did, I know not.

He said that after his arrival at Puebla he was first stationed at Cholula, where he remained about a year, but as the natives do not like foreign priests he was removed to Puebla, where he had not been regularly assigned, and at the time he was engaged in teaching French and English in private families.

He knew Puebla and Cholula, in and out. So, without letting him know my business, I questioned him closely on every point pertaining to the country that had any bearing on my search for Dean Bridgman Conner. He explained the almost fanatic religious zeal of the natives, their customs in the villages where the cacique ruled them as he had in the days of the Aztecs before the Spaniards came, and in spite of the fact that there were regular government officials in these places.

So strong was the old Aztec instinct in the natives that in a village like Cholula an escort of several men was sent to the priest's residence on Sundays to bring him to church, just as the ancient Aztec priests were escorted to the sacrificial temples on the pyramids. The troubles of my friend the priest with the natives began when he demurred against being escorted in this manner.

His annoyance over this unsolicited escort aroused a suspicious enmity among the natives, who do not look with favor on foreign priests, and with less of favor on American priests than those of other nationalities. They protested to the Archbishop; hence the transfer of the priest to Puebla. But in spite of this opposition he was well liked by many of the upper class people in Puebla.

He explained to me with a good deal of acumen and insight into native Mexican character the traditional dislike the common people of Mexico have for foreigners, and the jealousy with which they regarded those foreigners who came to work and reside among them. And he thought this feeling was more intense among the natives of the Cholula valley than those of any other portion of Mexico.

He next explained the peculiar Jefe Politico system, by means of which the federal government of Diaz kept a vigil on every portion of the republic. Each state had in it a Jefe Politico, an official somewhat like a United States marshal, only the Jefe Politico had almost unlimited powers. He was higher in authority than the elected governor of the state, and had at his command the military forces which were stationed in the state. In addition his minions were in every village and town of the state and they furnished him with reports

of the conditions in their localities each day or week as the case might require. The central or federal government was thus kept in touch with every corner of the republic by means of the bureau telegraph lines. If, for instance, the Jefe Politico thought the streets needed cleaning, he promptly suggested the fact to the proper local official, and if it was not done promptly, he ordered it done — and it was done when he ordered it. This is only given as an example of his authority.

The Jefe Politico or his bureau knew every building and every adobe hut in his district, and I found that even the flimsiest adobe huts in the country districts had numbers on them. So it will readily be seen that when this man turned on the wheels of his bureau to find anybody he was usually successful. In fact, I found that because of this bureau it would be much more difficult to hide at that time in that part of Mexico than in the United States.

This information did not all come from the priest at one sitting. We had several conversations during my stay and we became very good friends. Still this and other information which he gave me was of much service during my search. It threw light on social and governmental conditions as did my talks with Dr. and Mrs. Osterheld — which it would take much time to acquire in any other way.

I might state that Señor Mirus, the Jefe Politico of Puebla at the time, aided the search in every way possible and got reports from all of his agents. When Mr. Dodge was in Puebla, Mirus sent some soldiers to help him search a place in the suburbs of which Mr. Dodge was suspicious.

But to come back to my own work. For more than a week I carefully studied the city and its institutions. These had all been investigated before, however, and my investigations revealed nothing new regarding them. In addition to this, Dr. Osterheld — who knew the city and its institutions thoroughly, and who was in close touch with the health and government authorities — assured me that such an institution as Dr. Cintz was supposed to conduct would be impossible in the city proper at least. And, for obvious reasons, such an institution could not be conducted beyond the confines of the city, and be in any way in touch with the city, without its becoming known not only to the Jefe Politico but to the merchants of the city and to the clergy.

Be that as it may, Dr. Osterheld and myself visited the Zaragoza statue together and took with us a powerful field glass. With this we scanned the entire country, looking everywhere for any promising-looking hills with buildings on them. There was just one, besides Pyramid

La Grande, which looked at all promising. It was located about fifteen miles away to the southeast in the Cholula valley, near the village of Santa Maria. It was a low hill and on top of it was what looked like a group of buildings. The more we studied this group the more it seemed to answer the Piper description, and we determined to visit the place the next day.

But while we were at the Zaragoza statue this particular day, and while we were referring to Mrs. Piper's description of the scene, we made a peculiar discovery. I hadn't paid any attention to the points of the compass, but Dr. Osterheld called my attention to the fact that Mt. Popocatepetl and the snow-capped range of mountains were slightly southwest of the point at which we stood behind the Zaragoza statue instead of the southeast, as Mrs. Piper had stated. Almost due east from the statue was Mt. Orizaba, snow-capped, rising some 18,000 feet above the sea level, and about sixty miles away, yet clearly visible — the highest mountain in Mexico.

However, on looking toward Mt. Orizaba one did not look across the city. The city was slightly south of a direct line and all that intervened on the outside of the city was a few straggling houses. But we carefully scanned this whole country to the east, and therein

we could not detect either a hill or a building that in any way filled Mrs. Piper's description. So we returned to Dr. Osterheld's home in the city and discussed with Mrs. Osterheld the entire matter. Then they told me some things about Mr. Dodge's visit to Puebla which showed how much of anxiety both he and Dr. Sparhawk had suffered during their search for Dean Bridgman Conner in and around Puebla while following the instructions of Dr. Hodgson and Mrs. Piper.

CHAPTER XV

Early in the forenoon of the following day, Dr. Osterheld and I secured horses and started from the Alameda in the southwestern part of the city of Puebla for the hill near the village of Santa Maria. As "hold-ups" were not infrequent in that part of the state, the doctor went armed. We took the road which leads past the Pantheon Municipale and the Catholic cemetery, and about a mile from this point we forded the Rio Aticipa which joins the Rio Atoyac a few miles farther to the southeast.

The road was in very bad condition — gullied and furrowed by the rains during the wet season, and apparently never repaired. Occasionally we overtook and passed packs of burros that were heavily laden with all kinds of produce, carried pannier fashion, while sandalled natives ran beside the patient little animals and goaded them on. Many of the natives held carefully in one hand bottles of oil which had been blessed by the Archbishop or his assistants in the cathedral at Puebla. This oil was used to feed the lamps which are burned before the family patron saint, for in Mexico nearly every native family has its own patron saint. In fact, the statue

or image of the saint is an important feature of even the small adobe dwellings, and is usually allotted a special room, even when there are only two, or three rooms at the outside, in these native houses. And the clothing for many of these saintly images is quite an item of expense in some Mexican families; for not only are the garments as expensive as the owner of the image can afford, but it is considered necessary by most Mexican families to get a complete new wardrobe for the image at least once a year.

In one hut which we visited near the village of Tininnitzla, we found in the "saint's room" an almost life-size figure of Christ on the Cross, carved out of wood. It was admirable as a piece of wood carving and the native said it had been in his family for generations. At the time he himself looked as if he might be at least eighty years old.

We two "gringos" attracted a good deal of attention that hot day as we rode through the villages down the valley by that one thread of a road. And it was a very hot day. There was not a cloud in the soft, cobalt sky, but the fields were fresh and green, for this is one of the most fertile valleys in the world, and the range of mountains to the south which connects Mt. Orizaba with Mt. Popocatepetl looked a cool purple in the soft light.

In every village there loomed up splendid old churches and monasteries, some of them seemingly neglected and going to ruin, but every one of them a rich example of that extraordinary Spanish-Colonial architecture which the conquistadores introduced into this valley in the sixteenth century. Nearly all the churches had one or two Moorish towers and usually a great dome covered with yellow, glazed tiles that glistened in the clear sunlight like burnished gold.

It was in this valley, at Tininnitzla, that the finest glazed tiles the world has ever seen were made in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. But the fine art of tile glazing has become obsolete in Tininnitzla, although I found that considerable glazed pottery, of a rather crude character, was still made in the village.

These remarkable architectural achievements in the Cholula valley were built long before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth. On the capstone of the front façade of the great cathedral in Puebla is the date 1575, and it is a veritable art treasure house inside. On the walls are paintings by famous Spanish, Italian and French artists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and there is one immense tapestry, the gift of Charles V of Spain. The choir screens were richly carved by Flemish

wood carvers, and the altar is of solid silver and onyx. And high up over the altar is a large star of diamonds. There were art treasures in nearly all the old churches and monasteries in the Cholula valley which we passed that day.

And the villages through which we passed were prosperous-looking villages — as prosperity went in that part of Mexico at the time. But there ought not to be anything other than prosperity in such a rich valley. Yet there seemed to be an utter lack of intelligence in the faces of many of the people we met. The children looked bright enough, and the girls and women looked bright, but most of the men looked flaccid and expressionless.

Finally we arrived at the little hill with the buildings on it, near Santa Maria. The hill was isolated and a small stream flowed in front of it. It was the center of a rich plantation. The hill was crowned with a group of stone buildings encircled by a high, thick stone wall that was pierced by an arched gateway with heavy doors, one of which was swung back. As we rode up to this gateway, we noticed a man about to mount a horse. He had a rifle and he looked inquiringly at us as we approached the entrance. He was a fine-looking, middle-aged man, short and thick set. He proved to be Señor Vasquez, owner

of this well-named hacienda of Buena Vista, and was just about to start for another one of his estates farther to the east.

Dr. Osterheld explained to him that we were Americans and would like to look through the buildings. He immediately turned to his administradore or superintendent and ordered the latter to show us through the entire place. Señor Vasquez then bade us adios and rode away. The administradore carried out his master's instructions to the letter. He even took us into the sleeping apartments, where rifles hung on the walls, into the kitchen, dining room, and up to the flat roof, from which a splendid view of the surrounding country was had; then into the granary and store-houses, the section in which the cattle were housed and, in fact, through every portion of the vast building, or series of buildings, which looked more like a fortification than anything else.

These haciendas were built for purposes of defense against bandits. The immense wall which surrounded this hacienda of Buena Vista is common to all the older haciendas. The natives who worked on the estate built their huts close to this wall, and if the bandits approached the natives went inside the wall and the strong gates were barred and bolted. There is also an architectural similarity to all

of these old haciendas. It is well to bear this fact in mind.

When the administradore was asked if white men ever worked on the estates in that country he laughed and pointed to the native huts. He explained that labor costs practically nothing there. The haciendados could get all the labor they wanted for twenty-five centavos a day — about twelve and one-half cents. The feudal idea persists. The natives go with the estate as a general thing, as in feudal times. They regard themselves as part of the estate and they have certain traditional rights which must be respected. They have a great many feast days, for instance, during which they will not work. The fact of the matter is the estate must keep them. They are born and die on the estate and regard themselves as a part of it. It is theirs in a sense just as much as the lawful owner's.

When asked if he had ever heard of such an institution as Dr. Cintz was supposed to run, the administradore shook his head and smiled. He did not believe such an institution could exist in the country without his knowing of it, and he had never heard that any white man lived in that part of the country.

He was as frank in his conversation with Dr. Osterheld as he was in his effort to show us everything in the hacienda. In fact it was

with some pride that this swarthy and intelligent native showed us all through the place over which he was administradore.

In a general way this hacienda answered the description given by Mrs. Piper. There was a main building surrounded by a group of buildings. There was an archway entrance, and down near the foot of the hill on either side of the road which led to the entrance were two trees, one in bloom and the other dead and "scraggly." But there was no Dean Bridgman Conner at Buena Vista, nor was there a Dr. Cintz.

So the return trip was taken up over the rough road. A lunch was had in a native hut on the way back. It consisted of eggs and corn cakes made from corn which the native woman ground in the most primitive fashion, at the moment. These cakes were made very thin and baked hard. Then came a sauce of some very hot peppers. It was more of an experience than a meal, but probably it was a sumptuous affair at that. Such things depend on the point of view and previous experience.

We reached Puebla at nightfall, and one gringo was pretty well used up after the day's work, for he was unused to horseback riding. And the fruitlessness of the trip did not tend to cheer him any.

My hopes were blasted now, in so far as

I had had hopes of finding Dean Bridgman Conner in or near Puebla, and my faith in Mrs. Piper was almost gone. For I had come to know Puebla and the country found about Puebla. The mystery had gone out of Puebla. That city was now as real to me as Boston. And furthermore this whole case had begun to take on some new aspects, and some vague suspicions in my mind had become rather clear and definite assumptions. So, on the way back to Puebla, I had decided on a new course of action, for I made up my mind I would not return to Boston until I had cleared up the Dean Bridgman Conner mystery.

This trip with a little further investigation of the immediate suburbs of Puebla practically wound up my work in that place.

CHAPTER XVI

I now reviewed the entire case in the light of my experiences in and around Puebla, and in doing so I became more and more impressed with the hold the Piper view of the case had on me. It was difficult to think rationally from any other standpoint. However, without wholly forsaking the theory that Mrs. Piper was right, I determined that a plain, common-sense investigation of Dean Bridgman Conner's life in the City of Mexico was necessary before I went any farther in pursuit of the young man on the lines laid down by Mrs. Piper and her "controls" and by Dr. Richard Hodgson. I was determined, if possible, to get at the exact truth, and in order to do this it more and more seemed necessary that I should meet the people who had known Dean Bridgman Conner, the people with whom he had worked, and with whom he had associated in the City of Mexico.

I had been thirteen days in Puebla and vicinity, and it was with a feeling of regret that I parted with Dr. and Mrs. Osterheld at the station. They had helped me a great deal during my investigations. Their knowledge of the language, of the city and country,

and of the people, including officials, was of inestimable value to me. In fact, had it not been for their interest and kindness and the interest and kindness of the Catholic priest, it would have taken me at least a month to accomplish what I had been enabled to accomplish in thirteen days.

I don't believe I ever felt any more lonesome or sick at heart in my life than when I stepped on the train at Puebla to ride to the City of Mexico. Up to this time I had been, as it were, under orders and following instructions; now I was going to act on my own initiative and I had no idea what it would lead to, or where.

And perhaps it was just as well that I didn't grasp the full magnitude of the task that was ahead of me. But I made up my mind to go at the thing logically and follow it step by step wherever it led. The Dean Bridgman Conner that I had been thus far following was a sort of dream figure. There was really nothing very tangible about his personality in my conception of him. I must know him more intimately. So, on the ride up from Puebla I made up my mind to begin at once, that afternoon, the task of finding out something of the real Dean Bridgman Conner.

Other than to make a few notes I hadn't thus far written anything on the case for my

paper. It wasn't necessary, for two reasons. In the first place it wasn't necessary from the standpoint of memory, as I had thought about nothing else for more than a month. It was on my mind night and day. And in the second place I wasn't expected to write on it until I got back to Boston with the problem solved either one way or the other — either bring back Dean Bridgman Conner alive or prove that he was dead.

I arrived in the City of Mexico about three in the afternoon, went straight to the Hotel Iturbide, registered, washed my face and hands, jumped into a cab and was driven to the American hospital, near Tlaxpana on the western outskirts of the city. I had determined to begin my investigation there and follow up whatever lead I might develop in that institution.

In less than a half hour the cab drew up in front of the hospital. The main building, two stories in height, stands back about one hundred feet from the street, and a broad flight of steps leads to the entrance. There was a little garden in front. On either side of the main building and extending toward the street were one story buildings — wards — which were reached from the garden paths by flights of steps. Extending back from either side of the main building were two other wards, and

at the end of the yard space was a small building — the morgue. A high wall surrounded the buildings and grounds. The entrance from the street was through an iron gate in front.

The administration office was on the first floor of the main building to the left of the main entrance. Here I found Mrs. Netterburgh, the matron. She was a rather large woman, past middle age. She bore an excellent reputation among the American residents of the City of Mexico.

I stated my business to her and she seemed rather surprised — surprised because she said she thought the entire matter had been satisfactorily settled during Mr. Dodge's first visit to Mexico. However, she was perfectly willing to tell me all she knew about Dean Bridgman Conner. That was all I wanted.

She got her record book and explained how Dean Bridgman Conner had come to the hospital on February 21, 1895, in company with a young man, and how he was placed in one of the wards in front of the building until a house physician examined him. He was found to be suffering from typhoid fever, and was consequently removed the following day to a room in the contagious ward to the left, and in the rear, of the main building.

She showed me the register to verify her statements. She said the young man was very weak when he arrived and that he needed constant attention up to the last moment. She told of Consul-General Crittenden's interest in Dean Bridgman Conner from the first.

When asked if she had seen the body after death, she said "No."

"Who had?"

With that she summoned a native male nurse named Guillermo Luna, who had attended young Conner. The nurse was very confident he had seen young Conner before and after death, and had helped dress the body for burial. Guillermo's appearance did not inspire much confidence in me at the time.

When asked if the Consul-General had seen the young man, Mrs. Netterburgh said "No," as typhoid was classed as a contagious disease in Mexico, and nobody ever went near the patients who had contagious diseases, except the nurses and hospital attendants.

This certainly seemed proper enough. From all hospitals patients who die of contagious diseases are buried every day, and friends are not permitted to see them after death. And for the same reason Mrs. Netterburgh herself had never been near the young man after he had been placed in the contagious ward.

Her duties were in the business office. The patients, after they entered, were in charge of the head nurse. I asked her who the head nurse was at the time of young Conner's illness. She said that a Miss Smith, a graduate of the Denver Hospital, at Denver, Col., was then the head nurse. I asked where Miss Smith was, for this was the first time I had heard of her. Mr. Dodge had never mentioned her to me and he later informed me that he himself had never heard of her until some time after he had been to the hospital the first time, and then her name did not make much of an impression on him.

Mrs. Netterburgh hesitated a moment and seemed embarrassed, but finally she said she did not know where Miss Smith was, as she had left the hospital about one month after Dean Bridgman Conner's death. Since then she had heard that Miss Smith was married to a man named Winn. She had also heard that the couple had been seen in several places in the republic, but she knew nothing definite about them.

Then Mrs. Netterburgh was asked if a patient named "Weltch" or "Welsh" had died in the hospital during the time Conner was there. This is the name of the person who, Mrs. Piper claimed, was buried in place of Dean Bridgman Conner and on whose

body Dean's clothes had been placed by the native nurses so as to make the deception all the more complete. Mrs. Netterburgh said that no such person had been in the hospital, and she exhibited the register on which all names were entered when patients arrived, to prove her statement.

Here are the names of those who entered the hospital during the month of February and the first part of the month of March, covering the whole period of Dean Bridgman Conner's illness in the hospital:

Hon. P. J. Gray, United States Minister to Mexico; died same day, of apoplexy, February 14.

L. Medrichtner, February 19.
A. E. Bates, February 20.
F. U. Winn, February 21.
C. Hegenald, February 21.
J. A. Stewart, February 21.
D. B. Conner, February 21.
W. T. Peck, February 22.
Edgar Hahn, February 27.
R. Kennette McRae, February 28.
Louis Kohler, February 28.
George McVicker, March 1.
A. McRae, March 2.
J. Dickey, March 5.
Mrs. Barrett, March 9.
George Wrighton, March 11.

Of these United States Minister Gray died, as stated, on February 14; Dean B. Conner on March 15, and George Wrighton, after a twenty-eight days' illness, on April 7.

If the records of the institution are to be believed, these are the exact facts relative to the patients who were in the hospital and those who died during the period of Dean Bridgman Conner's illness there. I noticed that against about half the names in that record book was the word "Alcoholism."

Further conversation drew out the fact that Miss Smith was present at the bedside of Dean Bridgman Conner when he died; also the fact that three different nurses under the charge of Miss Smith had attended him during his illness. The expense of caring for the young man was $25 per week, besides the expense for extra nurses, brandy and such things, making the whole amount, Mrs. Netterburgh thought, $140, which Consul-General Crittenden paid her after the funeral. The young man's trunk was opened in the presence of the Consul-General and a suit of clothes was taken therefrom in which to clothe the body for burial. Then all the rest of the effects were turned over to the Consul-General. He had been promptly notified of Conner's death, and Mrs. Netterburgh said that he came immediately to the hospital.

She then took me to the room in the contagious ward in which young Conner had died. It was a small room with one small window which was barred with iron bars outside. No person could possibly squeeze through the spaces between these bars, but if a delirious person should get through that barred window, he would next have to scale a wall about nine feet high. Otherwise if he were taken from the institution he would have to go through the grounds and through the iron gate in front, which, by the way, was kept constantly locked. There was a watchman on the grounds all night, and there were two pretty fierce watch dogs chained on the grounds. So if Dean Bridgman Conner left that institution alive, he must have gone with the full knowledge and consent of those in charge of the grounds.

Mrs. Netterburgh could not remember the exact time of burial, but she was sure that no Americans accompanied the body to the grave. She was pretty certain the burial occurred early the next morning, as is the custom when patients die of contagious diseases. But nobody in the hospital could be found who had seen the body of Dean Bridgman Conner after death except the native nurse Guillermo Luna (William Moon). Clearly then, the person to find was Miss Smith. But

where could such a wanderer be found, and why had not Mr. Dodge said something about her to me before I left Boston?

Before leaving the hospital I asked for Dr. Bray, the physician who had attended Dean Bridgman Conner. I learned that he had severed his connection with the institution some months previously, and had left the country. I also learned later that although he was an excellent physician, he was an adventurous spirit, with a passion for wealth and other things which led him into a variety of schemes, and he had found it convenient to take up a residence in Guatemala.

After leaving Mrs. Netterburgh, I paid a visit to the American cemetery near by. It is beautifully located on a rise of ground sheltered by tall trees and surrounded by a stone wall, and it was well kept.

The superintendent, Capt. John Ayers, was found. He was an old Grand Army man, rather short of stature and somewhat deaf. He spoke in a high treble so that there was not much of an opportunity to hold a quiet conversation with him on any subject, but when the name of Dean Bridgman Conner was mentioned the captain raised his voice higher than usual. Asked if he was sure Conner had been buried in the cemetery, he said:

"Well, all I got to say is I wish I was as

sure of five years more of my life as I am that he is over there in that grave," pointing to a grave near the center of the cemetery.

"Did you see him when he was buried?" I asked.

"Did I see him? — Of course I did."

"Are you sure his body was in the casket?"

"No, I'm sure the casket was put in the grave, and if he was in the casket he's there now. None of 'em ever came back yet," he concluded with some emphasis.

He then invited me to his office to see the records, and as he turned them over he remarked:

"That young man was buried a poor man. He had nothing, and what would they want to make away with him for if he had nothing? That's all nonsense." The captain had evidently heard all about Dean Bridgman Conner. He then showed me the order the Consul-General had sent for a grave for Dean Bridgman Conner. It read as follows:

United States National Cemetery,
United States Consulate-General,
City of Mexico, March 15, 1895.

John Ayers, Keeper of the American National Cemetery, at Tlaxpana, near the City of Mexico.

Sir: You are hereby authorized to permit the burial of Dean Bridgman Conner, an

American citizen, in the cemetery under your charge.

Yours very respectfully,
THOMAS T. CRITTENDEN,
U. S. Consul-General.

NOTE: The U. S. Government furnishes free of charge a place and an ordinary grave. Any extra work such as placing large boxes, building brick vaults, etc., must be done at private expense.

"That young man had no money or he wouldn't have been buried in that grave," remarked Captain Ayers, as he put back the paper in the file.

"Didn't you receive any money for the grave?"

"No," was the reply. "The only money I ever received was five Mexican dollars some time after the burial to pay for the putting of some bricks on the grave."

In point of fact the family thought the expenses included a brick-lined grave, and the only explanation that can be offered for this and some other charges made on the bill is that the traditions of the American consular service are not consistent with the ordinary methods of doing business.

That ended the conversation with Captain

Ayers. It was after sunset and nothing more could be done that day.

To my mind Mrs. Netterburgh and Captain Ayers told the truth.

CHAPTER XVII

After all there was some satisfaction in this afternoon's work. I had not accomplished very much but there was something of reality in my experience. I had seen people who had seen and known Dean Bridgman Conner. I had stepped from the land of dreams and vague things into a position where it was possible to grasp something tangible. The American hospital was now very real. It was not a weird, uncanny place. It was an institution to care for Americans overtaken by illness. Even the American Minister to Mexico had been taken there. That showed the confidence of the authorities in the institution. It did not look like a place in which foul plots were hatched nor in which evil purposes were intended against the patients.

I could not help but recall what Mr. Boss had said to me that night on the train before we reached Zacatecas: "We Americans are rather proud of that hospital. It has cost us a good deal of money. We think it is the best hospital in the republic."

And there was that other remark of Mr. Ayers, the cemetery superintendent: "He was a poor man. What would they want of him? He had nothing."

This led to the thought: It is rather strange that if this young man were being held for ransom his captors had never asked or notified anybody that they held him captive or wanted ransom. And as he had been an ordinary workman in a theatre he could not be the possessor of enough property of any kind to warrant his being kidnapped for his mere worldly possessions.

And curiously enough while I was in this frame of mind I recalled a remark that the American Minister to Argentina in the early nineties — Minister Pitkin — had made to me. He said: "It is useless to try and tell the people of the United States anything about South America, for everything south of the Rio Grande is just simply fog bank to ninety-nine per cent of the people of this country."

I could see that Mexico had been very much of a fog bank to me, perhaps more like one of those mirages I had noticed as we crossed the desert near Torreon on the way down.

The next step was to find Miss Smith, the head nurse, the one American who had seen Dean Bridgman Conner all through his illness in the hospital and who, Mrs. Netterburgh asserted, had been with him when he died. She must be found and talked with, if possible.

It was possible that something might be known about her at the American Legation or at the American Consulate. I had not as yet visited either of these places, nor had I presented the letter from Secretary Olney to anybody. It had been my object to make as little fuss as possible, and to accomplish the rescue of Dean Bridgman Conner alone and as quietly as possible.

But now that I had gone on an entirely new tack it seemed wise and necessary to present myself at the Legation and the Consulate, and when I called at both these places the next day I found I was not wholly unexpected. Evidently Mrs. Netterburgh had got in touch with both offices by telephone or otherwise after my visit to the hospital.

Judge Sepulveda, who was in charge of the Legation, received me very cordially and after reading Secretary Olney's note assured me the Legation was ready to aid me in my investigations in any way possible. I did not tell him I was a newspaper man and I think he took it for granted from the nature of Secretary Olney's letter that I was a government employee — probably a secret service man. He said he thought the mystery had been satisfactorily cleaned up by Mr. Dodge when the latter made his first visit to Mexico and had the body exhumed. He could not well

understand why there should have been any further doubts on the matter. He could not see how or why anybody should want to kidnap Dean Bridgman Conner and hold him a year or more for no possible reason. And admitting that he had been kidnapped and was being held for ransom, why did not his captors make the fact known and in some way demand or ask for the ransom?

"I believe somebody is laboring under a delusion in this matter," said Judge Sepulveda gravely, "but I suppose it is necessary that you should get all the facts in the case, and I want to help you get those facts."

I then asked him if he had ever heard of Miss Smith, the former head nurse in the hospital. This was the thing that was uppermost in my mind, and the Judge's answer gave the whole case a new and somewhat startling turn.

Yes, he had known Miss Smith, and he said, as if to himself: "I wish I could find her; I've been trying to locate her for about a year. She doesn't know she has been cleared of the charge of murder in the hospital, and I want to let her know about it."

"Murder? What do you mean?" I almost gasped. Then he told me the following curious story about Miss Smith:

Soon after the death of Dean Bridgman

Conner she had accidentally given one of the patients in the hospital some medicine from the effects of which he died inside of a few hours. In Mexico death under such circumstances was classed as murder, and to escape this charge Miss Smith fled from the hospital under somewhat romantic circumstances.

"It was a very unfortunate affair," said Judge Sepulveda, "but Miss Smith was entirely blameless in the matter. She was passing through one of the wards at the time, when a patient asked her to pass him the medicine that was on a table near his bed. It was late in the day — very nearly dark at the time. On the other side of the table was another bed with a patient. This patient had been operated on and a disinfectant wash was being used on his wound. The wound had been examined, and washed, and bandaged by one of the physicians a short time previously, and this wash had been left in a glass about the same size as the glass containing the other patient's medicine, and the color of the liquid in both glasses was very similar.

"Miss Smith handed the patient the glass nearest him on the table at the moment, but when he had taken a swallow of the contents she realized her mistake. She rushed to her room for her stomach pump, but could not find it. Somebody had taken it, without her knowl-

edge or consent, and it was the only one in the hospital. Valuable time was lost in the hunt for the pump, and before emetics or anything else could be applied the patient became unconscious and died.

"Only two courses were open to Miss Smith. She must give herself up to the authorities and await an investigation and possible trial for murder, or flee from the country instantly — before the cause of the death should be made known.

"At the time there was a patient named Winn in the hospital. He was a Texan and he was convalescent. Whether out of chivalry or love, or both, he volunteered to escort Miss Smith out of the country that very night, and they caught a train for the north and were well up to the border before the authorities found out about the matter."

This is in substance as Judge Sepulveda told me the story. In point of fact little was said about the matter publicly. The board of government of the hospital investigated the case, found out the exact facts, and as the finding was satisfactory to the Mexican authorities, Miss Smith was acquitted. But she didn't know that she had been acquitted, and after Judge Sepulveda had told me the facts he again said, "I wish I could locate her and let her know that she has been acquitted."

I then said impetuously: "Could you write out the acquittal in a note to her on the Legation paper and let me have it? I may find her, and I would be glad to deliver it to her."

"Certainly," said the Judge, and he at once took a sheet of paper, wrote the fact that after an investigation she had been acquitted, put it in an envelope, put her name on the envelope and handed the letter to me.

"I have heard it rumored that she and Winn were married after they got into Texas," continued Judge Sepulveda, "but I don't know how true that is. I have also heard that they have been seen a couple of times at different places in the republic, but I could never verify that rumor. I know it would be a great relief to her to know that she has been acquitted."

I somehow felt that if I had the good fortune to find Miss Smith this letter would be of some value to me. And so it turned out, but I had no idea what I would have to go through to find Miss Smith, or rather Mrs. Winn. However, the main thing was to find this woman who, it was said at the hospital, had been with Dean Bridgman Conner when he died, and get from her an affidavit to that effect.

But where was I to look for this woman? Judge Sepulveda could not help me, so I called on Consul-General Crittenden, whose offices

were next door to those of the Legation. He was at his desk and I found him a tall, fine-appearing man, past middle age, but rugged and active, and very courteous. He talked as if he had expected me and he went over the case and told me all the facts of Dean Bridgman Conner's illness, death and burial. He also told me about Mr. Dodge's first visit and investigation, which ended with the exhuming of the body.

It was all logical enough. I decided not to ask the Consul-General any embarrassing questions about the grave, or the jewels which it was suspected Dean Bridgman Conner owned, and which had not been returned. I felt I needed the Consul-General's friendship in my search more than his antagonism and I could see that embarrassing questions or suspicions as to his conduct would do me no good then.

So we discussed Miss Smith and her possible whereabouts. He had heard in a roundabout way that Winn had been seen within a couple of months at Maravatio in the state of Michoacán, but beyond the mere fact that the man had been seen there nothing further was known. He would make further inquiries, however, and perhaps in a day or two he would be able to learn something more definite.

Consul-General Crittenden introduced me

to his son, who was the Assistant Consul at the time, and the latter took me over to the American Club, where we chatted for a couple of hours. He introduced me there to several Americans. However, I was unable to learn anything further that day about Miss Smith or Mr. Winn.

CHAPTER XVIII

The idea of finding Miss Smith, the head nurse, took full possession of me, but I felt that even before I searched for her I had better see Edward Orrin, for whom Dean Bridgman Conner had worked at Orrin's Circus, which was half theatre and half circus and was very popular at the time with all classes in the City of Mexico.

So I called on Mr. Orrin at his office the next day and had a long talk with him. He said that Conner had not been really well from the day he landed in the City of Mexico, nor had he been a well man for some time before his arrival in Mexico. But he had grit and worked, although he appeared to suffer a good deal at times. Finally he was taken down with typhoid fever at his lodging house.

"I advanced him money while he was sick at the lodging house," said Mr. Orrin, "as he was dependent entirely on his wages. He had nothing."

"Didn't he have any valuable jewels?" I asked.

"Not that I know of," said Mr. Orrin. "He had a ring that he had purchased on the instalment plan — an opal, I believe — but I

think he sold that back to the man he bought it of when he was sick. He got something back on it — not much, I guess, for he was constantly sending to me for money. I gave orders that he have proper medical attendance, and finally I advised him to go to the American hospital, where he could get proper care. He was very weak when he went to the hospital and he didn't live more than a couple of weeks. His people provided for him at the hospital through the Consul-General. This idea that he is alive is preposterous. Why should anybody want to take a patient ill with typhoid fever from the hospital? He could hardly move when he was taken there."

There was no reasonable answer that could be made to Mr. Orrin's question, and it would have been ridiculous to open up the case to him from the standpoint of psychical research or on the assertion of even so celebrated a medium as Mrs. Piper. For there was nothing mysterious or occult in the Dean Bridgman Conner that Mr. Orrin had known. The illness of the young man was very real to him. He had known him, knew his condition, had provided him with money and medical attendance, had sent him to the hospital, and he knew that death was inevitable under the circumstances. But he had not seen Dean Bridgman Conner after the latter had entered

the hospital. In point of fact he couldn't, if he had wanted to, for the same reason that Mrs. Netterburgh had not seen him during his illness and after death — because typhoid fever was regarded as a contagious disease in Mexico.

I next visited the young man's lodging place and heard the same story there, and I visited the undertaker who had furnished the coffin in which Dean Bridgman Conner was supposed to have been buried. He did nothing but send a coffin to the hospital. The burial was attended to by the hospital authorities. I could not find the man from whom Dean Bridgman Conner purchased the ring.

I was engaged for several days in tracing the movements of Conner in the City of Mexico before his illness. I talked with those who had worked with him — Americans — and they said he had not been well at any time while he worked at the circus, and that he was very indiscreet in his eating and method of living. But he had great nerve and stuck it out at his work until he had to give up, and until the typhoid had weakened him considerably. This did not help him any later, after the disease had fastened itself on him.

The only thing left then was to find Miss Smith or Mrs. Winn. So I began making inquiries on my own account quietly about

Winn, and I stumbled on his whereabouts in a peculiar way.

The next day after my interview with Mr. Orrin I walked out of the Hotel Iturbide after dinner with a man from Louisville, Ky., who was stopping at the hotel and with whom I had become casually acquainted. We lighted cigars and went for a stroll out to the Shrine of Guadalupe, where there is a splendid church — several of them — dedicated to the Virgin. It is the most famous shrine in Mexico and millions of pilgrims visit it each year. The miracles are said to be as wonderful as those at Lourdes in France.

When we returned my companion said he wanted to see a friend of his, an American dentist, who had an office at the time almost directly opposite the Hotel Iturbide. I accompanied him and he introduced me to the dentist. It was getting late in the afternoon and the three of us sat and chatted for some time. Finally I asked the dentist if he had ever known an American named Winn — F. U. Winn.

"Yes," said the dentist, "I met him about two months ago at the railroad station in Maravatio in the state of Michoacán. I had been down that way at a hacienda near Zataciro doing some work on the teeth of the daughter of a wealthy haciendado. I had to go up on

a mining train from Maravatio to Tuxpan Junction, and from there I went by stage-coach to the hacienda. I came back the same way three days later, and it was while I was waiting at Maravatio for the train to the City of Mexico that I saw Winn. I don't know him much more than to bow to him, but before I had a chance to speak to him my train came along and I jumped aboard. I saw him standing on the platform when the train drew out. I suspect he was waiting for the mining train to Tuxpan Junction, and that he lives in the mountains up there.

"Winn would attract attention anywhere," continued the dentist, "for he is more than six feet tall, is very thin, and he has only one arm."

This description of Winn was new to me. I had not heard about his having only one arm. But there was nothing more the dentist could tell me about him. However, this was clear and definite as far as it went. The dentist assured me that this was the same man who had left the hospital with Miss Smith. That adventure had made Mr. Winn famous among the American colony in the City of Mexico, and he was naturally a marked man, as much because of that episode as because of his physical characteristics.

I made up my mind that night that I would

go to Maravatio and begin a search for an American more than six feet tall with only one arm. I felt sure I could find such a man if he were anywhere in that section of the country. I looked up the railroads to Maravatio and found that only one line went through the state of Michoacán — the National railroad — and it went straight from the City of Mexico to Maravatio, about one hundred and fifty miles. This fact should make the search a little easier, for if Winn travelled at all he must travel over that road, and the engineers or conductors must have at least noticed him. How could they help it?

Before entering on this chase, however, I decided to talk the matter over with Judge Sepulveda, tell him what I had learned and if possible get into touch with some Americans or officials in Maravatio through him. My reception this time was not exactly what I had anticipated. After I had told the Judge that I intended to follow Winn into the Angangueon Mountains or wherever the trail might lead, he looked very grave for some moments and said:

"I can't give my consent to your going into the Angangueon Mountains at this time. They are having a good deal of trouble down there over the change in ownership of the Angangueon mine. That is one of the biggest mining prop-

erties in Mexico, and it was owned by Germans but has been sold to an English syndicate. The natives don't like the change of ownership and there has been a good deal of trouble at the mine. Some five thousand natives work in and around the mine. It is positively dangerous to go into that country at the present time, and if we are going to be responsible for your safety, I can't give my consent to your going down there."

"But I must go," I persisted. "I must find this Miss Smith or Mrs. Winn. I must talk with her and get a statement from her. That is the only way this mystery can be cleared up."

"If you go you go without my consent, and I will have to disclaim responsibility for your safety in those mountains. They are rioting down there and several people have been killed."

"Well, then, I will go without your consent."

"Suit yourself," said the Judge as he arose from his chair. I assured him I would take the responsibility. He smiled, and we parted.

During these days in the City of Mexico I called several times on Mr. Boss and got his advice in regard to some things that bothered me in my search. Among other things he gave me a note of introduction to Mr. Orrin, as both were trustees of the American hospital. I had to be extremely cautious in my move-

ments so as not to attract too much attention, for there were some enterprising newspaper men in the City of Mexico at the time, and some of them were correspondents for American papers. I managed to avoid them, however, and the belief that I had been sent by the United States Government prevented any leaks at the Legation and Consulate.

CHAPTER XIX

I now felt I was doing a real bit of newspaper work. The spirit of the chase possessed me. I was going to track this man Winn to his lair, or his house, or wherever he lived, in Maravatio or Zataciro, or the Angangueon Mountains. I had no very clear plan as yet. I was going to let circumstances shape my course. Luck was with me almost from the start.

When I look back on that particular part of my trip I can appreciate somewhat the truth of that old maxim which begins "Where ignorance is bliss," for I certainly would not have been in such exuberant spirits had I known just what was ahead of me. However, as I didn't know, I went ahead and just kept going.

It was a beautiful morning about the middle of February, 1897, when I started over the Mexican National railway for Maravatio in the state of Michoacán, about one hundred and fifty miles west of the City of Mexico. It was early when I left the hotel, and there were very few people about. In fact, all I met on my way to the railroad station was

a company of prisoners being marched on the double quick by gendarmes to the central prison. Friends of the prisoners trotted along beside them and handed them bread, fruit and other eatables.

There were very few passengers on the train when it drew out of the City of Mexico. Seated in the car with me were a man and woman whose conversation proved them to be Americans. I accosted them and before we had gone far I learned they were a newly-married couple from Chicago on a honeymoon. They were middle-aged people and were very cordial, as people are wont to be when travelling in foreign countries.

They were so happy and felt so little of conventional restraint, because we happened to be alone in the car, that they told me in the jolliest manner some of their experiences of the preceding month in Mexico. And some of these experiences were ludicrous when looked at from the honeymoon standpoint, for Mexico was never intended for honeymooners with tender sensibilities.

In a burst of confidence they also told me that this was their second venture in the matrimonial line and that as both of them had worked hard all their lives they decided to see a little of the world before they settled down in Chicago again. But just why they

happened to pick Mexico as a land to be exploited on a honeymoon trip they didn't say. They were having a good time and they were then on their way to the Pacific Coast, from whence they intended to go by water to California.

When the conductor came along I engaged him in conversation, and as I was the last passenger in the last car of the train he sat down beside me. He was an American. He said he had taken the tall, one-armed American I described several times on his train to Maravatio. He also knew that the man's name was Winn and that Winn always took the mining train that ran from Maravatio into the Angangueon Mountains to the Angangueon mine and to a point beyond the mine, known as Tuxpan Junction, where the mining road ended. This was good enough for me. I was on the right track so I gave myself up to sightseeing and to occasional conversation with the Chicago honeymooners.

The National railroad passes through a splendid country, skirting the Teluca range of mountains a part of the way and passing over immense chasms and around steep hills until it gets into a flat country west of Teluca. From this point to Maravatio the ride is rather monotonous.

Arrived at the latter place, I wished the

honeymooners joy on their trip and happiness in the future of their lives, and they invited me to call on them, if ever I came to Chicago. I haven't been to Chicago since then. But the little touch of domesticity that I had experienced left me feeling rather lonesome as I stood on the platform watching the train roll away, and it set me to thinking of my own home in the far North where the ground was probably covered with snow, while all about me was sunshine and flowers and green foliage up the sides of the mountain range behind Maravatio.

I had to wait at Maravatio several hours for the mining train, and here my good luck stood by me again. I learned that a construction train consisting of an engine and two flat cars loaded with railroad ties was going up over the narrow gauge mining road to Tuxpan Junction, ahead of the ore train to which a passenger coach was attached. So I went down to the construction train to see if I could get aboard in some way and thus gain a little time. But I found that practically all available space had been pre-empted by about a dozen uncongenial-looking peons who were seated on the ties and were, I learned, being taken up to work on the road. I could have gotten on with them, but at the last moment I changed my mind and decided to wait for the ore

train, which was scheduled to leave about a half an hour later.

The little engines on this mining road burned mesquite — a hard, scrubby wood which makes a fire almost as hot as coal. Because of the heavy load of ties and peons, the engine of the construction train had a hard pull on the steep grades and emitted clouds of sparks from the smokestack. To avoid these sparks the peons all crowded on the last car, and because of the extra weight the coupling of this car broke when rounding a curve on a particularly steep grade. The released car shot backward down the grade to a sharp curve, where it left the track and rolled into a chasm, killing outright six or seven of the peons.

Word of the accident was telegraphed to Maravatio from the mine, farther up, and the Jefe Politico was notified at once. That official with some of his assistants came rushing to the mining train to be taken to the scene of the accident, and I had to wait until they returned with the train. They got back to Maravatio about seven o'clock in the evening, and the result was that when I reached Tuxpan Junction on top of the mountains, it was about eight o'clock and pitch dark.

The man in charge of the mining train was an Englishman and he was not very com-

municative. After some questioning, he said that he had carried Winn about a week previously from Maravatio to Tuxpan Junction, and from there Winn went on horseback across the mountains toward Zataciro. He did not know exactly where Winn lived, or what he did, as he himself had only been in the service of the road and mining company a few weeks. The dingy little passenger coach was crowded with women and children from Maravatio, all of whom left the train at the mine; so I was the only passenger to Tuxpan Junction, about four or five miles beyond the mine.

It was very cold as well as dark when I stepped from the train at Tuxpan Junction. In fact, I couldn't see the Junction or anything but the Englishman who had stepped into the darkness ahead of me with a smoky little lantern that had been hanging in the car and which was now dangling from his right arm. He swung the lantern and the train moved away slowly down to what I learned the next morning was a rude shed and roundhouse. Then I suppose the engineer left it, for after a few gasps from the engine, there was silence — the silence of night in the mountains, which is only equalled by the silence of night in the forest.

Without saying a word the Englishman started down the track after the train and

left me standing there in the darkness. I called to him and he turned and stood for a moment. I asked him if there was any place in the vicinity where I could stop for the night, and he pointed with his lantern to a dim little light down the track in the direction from which we had come, and said: "That's a hotel."

Then he disappeared in the darkness.

The utter unconcern of that man in such a place, at such a time, and under such circumstances is something I have never seen approached in all my experience, and it roused every bit of pride and resentment there was in me. I wouldn't have asked that fellow another question if I had had to camp there on the track until daylight. However, I was destined in a few minutes to experience the fullness of English hospitality from another source.

I stood there for some minutes beside the track until my eyes became a little accustomed to the darkness and then I found it wasn't so utterly dark as I imagined on first stepping from the train. Overhead the dark blue sky fairly blazed with stars and I could make out what seemed like little mountain peaks — looking like cones or pyramids — a deeper dark against the starlit sky. But the silence seemed like the silence of utter desolation. There wasn't a movement of the air nor a

sound of any kind after the engine had ceased to gasp, and the only thing visible, on the level of the eyes, was the little light down the track. I couldn't make out a house into which the Englishman could have disappeared after he vanished. And it was cold — a sort of cold cold.

I carried a little hand bag which I dropped for a moment while I buttoned up my light overcoat about my throat. Then I started down the track for the light. Before I reached it I noticed a little platform on which was a long, low wooden building, at the farther end of which was the light. I got on the platform and soon found the light was from a lantern over an open doorway. This led into a small room in which was a rough bar on one side and behind the counter stood a Mexican, leaning against a wooden post, with his zerape wrapped closely about him up to his nose. He wore a straw sombrero. He paid not the slightest attention to me when I entered. He didn't look at me. He seemed as if he might have been absorbing the contents of some of the bottles behind him. I dropped my bag on the counter almost under his nose, but that didn't disturb him. I spoke to him in my best Spanish, and told him I wanted something to eat and a place to sleep, and I began my request with the customary "Si Señor," which

had heretofore commanded respectful attention if nothing more. That had no effect on him. He wasn't asleep, for his eyes were wide open. He was staring into vacancy.

I repeated my request in English. Not a move out of him. Then I looked around and noticed a door near one end of the bar, which was open. I stepped down to this door and found it led into a large room with rough pine tables and long wooden seats on either side of the tables. Down near the end of this room was a small lamp and under it sat a man, back to me, eating. He wore a sort of khaki miner's costume and I could just catch a glimpse of two revolver handles sticking from his belt. I guessed from the broad back of his head and his general build that he was not a Mexican. So I entered the room, walked up to the end of the table at which he was seated, dropped my bag on the table, and just as he turned around sideways to look up at me, I said:

"English?"

There was both confusion and embarrassment on his ruddy, beardless face as he stood up and stared at me for a moment, saying, "Yes, sir."

Then I laughed and said: "I didn't want to know your nationality. I just wanted to know if you spoke English or any language I could

understand, or whether you were deaf and dumb like the fellow out at the bar."

He laughed and we both sat down, but I kept on in the same strain, saying, "I exhausted my linguistic talents on that man who is standing up behind the bar and I couldn't get even a nod of recognition out of him. I don't think he knows I'm here. Has he lost his squaw or is it a booze trance he's in?"

The Englishman just stared at me with a broad grin on his face. "Now," I continued, "I'm about starved. All I've had to eat since I left the hotel in the City of Mexico this morning is two half-sized bananas at Maravatio. What I want now is something to eat and a place to sleep."

"I'll have you fixed up in a jiffy," said the young Englishman as he strode out to the bar. I don't know what he said or did, or what kind of magic he used, but whatever it was the Mexican came to life instantly, hustled into a little back kitchen and in a very short time brought me some fried eggs, bacon, beans, bread and coffee — a meal that I keenly relished. Meanwhile the young Englishman laughed until tears rolled down his cheeks as I commented on the magnificence of the hotel we were stopping at, the wonderful efficiency of the service, and the general air of quiet

that pervaded the whole place both inside and outside.

My companion proved a veritable Godsend. His name was Vaughan. He was a fine, athletic, brown-haired and blue-eyed young man less than thirty years of age; a graduate of Oxford University, a civil engineer, and for the time being he was superintendent of construction of an extension of the narrow-gauge mining road that was being pushed across the mountainous country to the southwest, to Zataciro. It was also intended to connect the road with some other mining properties in the mountains. He had travelled and seen much of Europe, of the United States and of Mexico, and he was well posted on the topics of the day the world over. A relative was a director in the new syndicate that controlled the Angangueon mine and the railroad.

Aside from the uncommunicative English conductor, an American engineer on the mining train and a French bridge engineer who was working with him, Vaughan said he hadn't seen a white man he could really talk to in three months. He was "bottled up," he said, in a part of Mexico that few English-speaking people visited. He did not know Winn, but he had heard of him and knew that he lived in a fine hacienda in the Tuxpan valley on the other side of the nearest mountain to the

west. Winn was reputed to be a wealthy man, a large land owner, but was very mysterious in his movements.

After I had finished eating, Vaughan called to the Mexican and the latter took us out to show me where I was to sleep. The hotel was in reality a rough wooden shack, one story high, and ran along the edge of the platform for about fifty feet. This was partitioned into rooms, the partitions extending only to the roof edge. The entrance to the rooms was from the platform and another door opposite led into the space behind the building. There was a little cot bed in one corner of the room and a tin wash-bowl and pitcher on a rough wooden bracket in another corner. On this the Mexican also placed a little lamp. The spaces between the wall boards were so wide that you could look in or out of the room, and the spaces between the roof boards were such that I could see the stars. I was glad it didn't rain that night.

"I suppose you have hot and cold water, electric fans and stained glass windows in your room," I remarked to Vaughan, and he laughed.

"Come along and I will show you my hacienda," he said, as he stepped from the platform and led the way across the tracks with a lantern he got from the Mexican. There

were a number of tracks and on one of them was an old freight car with a little flight of wooden steps leading up to the side door. Vaughan went up the steps, pushed the door aside, entered and invited me to follow.

"This is my den," said he. And true enough it was. This old car was fitted up inside in pretty good style. In the center was a table with a student lamp, which he lit. On one end was a cot bed and on one side was a draughtsman's stand with inclined drawing board and instruments. On the other end of the car was a little bookcase filled with books and near this was a small table covered with magazines, including *London Punch* and other English weeklies and the best American magazines. There were several chairs, including a long canvas chair which he insisted I must occupy.

"You certainly have brought a little of civilization along with you into this country," I remarked, as I picked up a magazine.

"Lord! I couldn't stand it if I didn't keep in some sort of touch with the world!" he exclaimed.

He had some good Mexican cigars and we sat there and chatted for hours as if we had known each other all our lives. Our tastes in reading proved to be very similar. He had been in cities and countries that I had been in and the memories of which brought us into a

closer intellectual sympathy. Finally I felt so much confidence in him that I told him just what had brought me to Mexico and to this out-of-the-way part of the world. He listened to the whole story with a good deal of interest. He was not unfamiliar with some of the work that had been done by Sir Oliver Lodge, Frederic W. H. Myers and others in the English branch of the Society for Psychical Research, and I think he had some recollection of Mrs. Piper.

"It is a strange old world any way you look at it," he remarked, "and the fact that we who never saw or heard of each other until a few moments ago should be sitting here in this old car on the top of these mountains, chatting as we are, is not the least strange thing about it."

We talked about Winn and his wife's connection with the case, and we agreed that the death of the patient by poison may have had something to do with the mystery of Winn's movements and his seclusion here in the mountains.

"They ought to be glad to see you," said Vaughan, "I can get you a guide and a horse in the morning. I know a native here who knows every foot of these mountains and I'm sure he'll know just where Winn lives."

It was long after midnight when he bade

me good-night at the door of my room after we had lighted the little lamp. The place no longer seemed incongruous, for I felt I was under the protection of a friend and a man who was a power in the place. But it was cold — so cold that I took off only my boots and lay down on the cot just as I was, overcoat and all, and wrapped the bed clothes around me. I was so tired that I fell asleep at once and slept until I was awakened by a loud knocking at the door, and I saw the sunshine through the seams in the roof and walls of my room.

I jumped up, opened the door and there stood Vaughan in the clear, dazzling sunshine. He laughed as I rubbed my eyes and stepped out on the platform, and looked about in wonder at such a scene as I had never expected to see.

Tuxpan Junction consisted of this shack of a hotel, a rough train shed and roundhouse a little way down and a number of switch tracks on which there were six or seven freight cars all occupied by natives and their families, and by the engineer and the conductor of the mining train. It was very much alive this morning with the native men, their women and children, and their hens and chickens. It didn't seem possible that so many living creatures could have been in such a quiet place as this was the night before.

But it wasn't these things that impressed me so much. It was the whole scene — the outlook. It was just a little level bowl of a place surrounded by mountain peaks, some of them rising like little cones out of the ground, and all covered with delicate green foliage — all except one that rose, bare and seared, like an old potter's chimney, and which was toned a brownish purple.

"How high up are we here?" I asked Vaughan.

"About 10,000 feet," was the answer.

I washed my face and we both went to the rough dining room where several others were seated, eating, at the time. Then Vaughan told me he had been up an hour or more and had ridden about two miles to a hacienda where he secured a horse and the guide he had spoken to me about. This guide knew just where Winn and his wife lived. It was about a four hours' journey around the largest of the mountains, and I ought to be able to get back before nightfall. He urged me to take one of his revolvers, but I declined.

"Well," he said, "they've had trouble with the natives down around the mine, but we've had none up here, and I don't believe you'll have any, but be careful. I have to carry weapons, as a man in my position is expected to carry them. It is the fashion down here.

Did you ever hear the story of the Scotchman who believed in predestination but carried a revolver?"

"No."

"Well, he said he carried it because he might meet some fellow who was predestined to die by that particular revolver, and he didn't want the Lord to be disappointed."

CHAPTER XX

The more I thought it over, the more deeply convinced I became that I was approaching the crux of this Dean Bridgman Conner mystery. Mrs. Winn should be able to clear it up one way or the other. So it was with a certain sense of relief and satisfaction, mingled with a little apprehension, that I mounted the horse which the guide brought around for me about half an hour after breakfast.

Vaughan had already started for the scene of his labors, saying he would be back at the Junction by six o'clock in the afternoon, when he hoped to meet me again after I had seen Mrs. Winn, whom he felt certain I would find.

The barefooted guide had no horse. He trotted along ahead of me across a stubbly field that led to a path which skirted this part of the mountain, and I had to force the horse to a pretty good trot to keep up with him. The path was a tortuous one, through underbrush, until we got into the thin woods of scrubby little oaks and other stunted trees that flourished in this altitude. The sun just blazed out of a cloudless sky, and it was in-

tensely hot. At one point the path ran along the edge of a rocky declivity from which I could look down into a wooded gorge that seemed one thousand feet deep, and through which a small river dashed in a series of falls. This was in some respects the most dangerous part of the journey, but that little horse of mine was as sure-footed as a mountain goat.

From this narrow ledge path we emerged into a clearing on either side of which was a heavy growth of underbrush and an occasional tree. This narrowed again as we began to round another peak, and at this point I got my first scare. The guide kept ahead of me about two hundred feet or more, but looked back frequently. We had been going about two hours when we reached this curving path and I was so tired and it was so hot that I was feeling drowsy. Of a sudden the horse started, and as I looked ahead I just saw a figure disappear in the underbrush between me and the guide. It aroused every fibre in me, and I looked sharply as we passed the spot but could see nothing through the dense undergrowth.

For a few moments I imagined all sorts of things. I realized how utterly helpless I was in such a place. Several times I lost sight of the guide in the sharp turns, but my horse kept right on, having evidently been over

that path before. It seemed but a few minutes when the horse started again and this time I saw two figures emerge from one side of the path ahead and disappear on the other side. There was not a sound to be heard except the soft hoof beats of the horse on the turf. The barefooted guide was absolutely noiseless, and I was sure that, this time at least, he hadn't seen the figures that crossed our path.

I remembered Judge Sepulveda's warning, also Vaughan's, and it came to me that perhaps I was being ambushed and that my guide was in league with these people. Nobody in the City of Mexico really knew where I had gone, or that I had left the city. Vaughan was the only person, except the guide, who knew where I was going, and if anything happened to me Vaughan might not find it out very soon; and if he did, what would it matter to him? It would only mean that another white man, an unknown man from the States, had been murdered or disappeared in the mountains.

I have never been able satisfactorily to explain even to myself the feeling that came over me then. It wasn't fear. It was a desire to fight; and I imagine it is the feeling that comes to any man or animal that is cornered. On turning a bend in the path we came to another clearing and the guide was about

the same two hundred feet ahead that he had been. On one side of the path was a small tree that had been blown down and near it was a stout limb about the girth and length of a short baseball bat. I called to the guide to come back and I dismounted and picked up the stick. He returned slowly, so I sat on the tree trunk and rubbed the sides of my knees, which were very painful owing to the short stirrups.

When he got near the horse, I picked up the stick and stepping up to him I looked into his eyes to see if there was anything on his Aztec mind. It was more on the strength of sensibility than reason that I acted, and somehow after looking narrowly at him for a moment I felt satisfied that he was not a party to any plot that might be hatching against me.

I felt satisfied of his innocence, at least, and mounted the horse again, but I held on to the stick. I told him to go ahead and off he started on the same kind of jog trot. About half an hour after this I heard a queer noise in the distance, as of shrieking and the sounds of some shrill musical instruments, with the occasional beat of a drum. In a little while we came upon the cause.

It was a weird procession of about fifty natives. Some of them were playing strange

musical instruments and others were singing a kind of chant. They were all men and boys. The faces of some were painted, while others wore masks and horns and all kinds of regalia. It was a startling kind of an outfit to meet in the mountains, especially after that other experience, but as the guide paid no attention to them, and as they were apparently indifferent to us, I manifested no surprise as I rode by them. However, it gave a tingle to the nerves that lasted until the noise of the chanting and the weird musical instruments died away in the distance.

I later learned that these people were from the near-by town of Tuxpan and that they were practising for the annual Ash Wednesday festival, which is made much of by the natives in this part of the country. There was a suggestion of the Zuñi snake dance in it, and there is no doubt but behind it all was something that came down through the ages — some relic of an ancient religious rite or ceremony that was easily grafted on to the celebration of a Christian festival.

It was not long after this when we came to a point where I could look down into the beautiful Tuxpan valley, in one corner of which was a very old church and a number of neat-looking native houses — adobe houses, mostly — with gardens and foliage around

them. It was one of the most beautiful valleys I have ever seen, cup shaped, with mountains all around and a little river flowing through it which fed small canals by means of which the fields were irrigated. There were thousands of acres in this valley and much of it seemed to be under cultivation.

In the distance the guide pointed out to me the hacienda of Señor Winn, and I mentally complimented the Texan for his taste and judgment in selecting such a place in which to live. What other purpose he might have had in coming to this remote part of the world and building for himself and wife a home, I did not consider at the moment. I felt that this man must be a thorough pioneer to do such a thing and to establish himself in the good graces of the natives. He must be a self-reliant man and I was anxious to meet him.

As we entered the village and were passing the old church with the picturesque Moorish tower, I could not resist the temptation to dismount and enter when I saw that the door was open. Over the entrance was a life-size bas-relief in terra cotta of a Spanish conquistador in helmet and corselet — a soldier of the time of Cortes. Inside was a very beautiful altar and on one wall hung a large painting by some Italian or Spanish artist

of the sixteenth century. It looked as if it might have been painted by Bronzino. It was an allegorical picture of heaven and hell. Many of the figures in heaven were standing on the edge of a bank of clouds, looking down with smiles on their faces at the red devils who were tormenting with pitchforks the naked residents of the underworld.

This church, I was informed, had been erected by a Spanish princess to the memory of her brother who had been killed on the spot. All this occurred about four hundred years before my visit to the place, but it showed how closely related religion and conquest were in the minds of the early Spaniards.

After this visit we resumed our journey to Señor Winn's hacienda through a shaded road. The native children, who stood and stared at us, were plainly astonished at the gringo horseman.

I rode up to the door of Señor Winn's handsome hacienda, dismounted and knocked. Mrs. Winn herself came to the door. She was a very pleasant little woman, I should think about thirty-five years of age, of medium height, brown hair and well built. When I told her I had travelled from the City of Mexico especially to see her and bring her some good news, she stared at me in a sort of blank amazement.

She seemed sort of dazed as she took the letter which I handed her. The envelope bore the United States Legation imprint. I told her to open it and read it. As she read the note her face flushed and at its conclusion she looked up with moist eyes and thanked me. She invited me into the house, which was handsomely furnished, and I then told her what my real mission was: to find out from somebody who had seen Dean Bridgman Conner in the hospital the exact facts of either his death or disappearance, and as she had been the head nurse in the hospital at the time, she surely could give me the information I desired.

Mrs. Winn said that first she wanted to explain how she came to give the poisonous wash to the patient who had died, and whose death had caused her so much trouble — in fact had made her a fugitive, as it were, from justice, never knowing when the Mexican authorities might locate her and throw her into jail.

She said she was the only trained nurse in the hospital at the time and she had been working night and day for weeks. She was called at all hours of the night. When this particular patient called to her, as she was passing his cot, and asked for his medicine, she handed him the glass that was near him,

which proved to be a poisonous wash that the doctor had carelessly left there after attending the patient in the next cot. The contents of both the glasses on the table looked alike. After discovering her mistake she ran to her room to get a stomach pump, but, as has been said, one of the doctors had taken it to his office. If the pump had been left in the hospital the patient's life might have been saved. She then fled from the hospital in company with Mr. Winn, who was a patient there at that time. It was practically the same story Judge Sepulveda had told me.

She thanked me again for the letter from Judge Sepulveda, which certainly must have taken a load from her mind, and she then told me about Dean Bridgman Conner in a straightforward and simple way. She said she remembered Dean Bridgman Conner very well; remembered how weak and pale he looked when he arrived at the hospital; remembered taking his name and putting it on the typhoid fever chart and remembered that in the course of a few days he had grown so much worse that she asked him for the name of some near relative. At this he said to her:

"Is it so bad as all that?"

"And I told him," said Mrs. Winn, "that

that was customary, so in case anything should happen we would know whom to inform. He gave me a name which I wrote on the back of the chart — I can't remember the name."

The name is that of the boy's father, which is, or was, on the back of the chart as stated.

"He grew weaker and weaker," continued Mrs. Winn, "and I was with him when he died. I allowed the body to lie in the room for several hours because the morgue at the end of the yard was not in a fit condition to receive it at the moment.

"I got a suit of clothes from Mrs. Netterburgh and had the body dressed, but at the time I decided not to put on the shoes, so I returned them to Mrs. Netterburgh. When the poor fellow was being carried out from the hospital to the cemetery I said, 'I've a good mind to put on my things and go up to the cemetery so that at least one American will be present at the grave.' But I didn't.

"He was such a quiet, nice young man," she continued, "that you could not help but like him. He had terrible hemorrhages from the bowels and I knew he could not live. I wrote about his death once to his people in Burlington, Vt., but I suppose they did not receive the letter, as I never heard from them."

This woman's whole statement was clear and simple and was made without the slightest hesitancy and without reservation of any kind. The fact in regard to the shoes was corroborated. There were no shoes on the body that had been exhumed. I asked her if it would have been possible to remove Conner from the hospital during his illness. She said that during the last five days of his illness he could not have been removed. He was too weak.

Mrs. Winn then signed the following statement which I drew up:

"This is to certify, that I, Mrs. Helen Smith Winn, was a nurse at the American hospital in the City of Mexico during the time that Dean Bridgman Conner was a patient at the institution in the latter part of the month of February and the first half of the month of March, 1895; I attended the said Dean Bridgman Conner in the capacity of nurse at the time and I was at his bedside when he died from the effects of typhoid fever. The exact time is on the chart. When I saw that he had breathed his last I notified the matron of the institution of the fact. The body lay in the room for some hours and was then removed to the morgue near the contagious ward of the hospital, from which it was removed the next day for burial, to

the American cemetery near by. To these facts I solemnly swear.

"(Signed) Mrs. Helen Smith Winn.
"February 24, 1897.
"Tuxpan, Estado de Michoacán, Mexico."

Here then was the one person who had seen Dean Bridgman Conner die. She had no reason to lie about it. She was a trained nurse and she knew when a person was dead. She was a bright, intelligent, American woman, of whom one patient who had been under her care thought so much that in her hour of misfortune and sorrow he decided at all hazards to protect her and make her his wife. She was mistress of this, the finest hacienda in the Tuxpan valley with several thousand acres of land.

This woman could be believed. She told a straightforward story and I found there never had been anything in her record that was not open to the closest inspection. The board of government of the hospital had, after a careful examination, acquitted her of responsibility for the death of the patient to whom the poisonous wash had been accidentally given, and this acquittal satisfied the Mexican government.

While at the hospital I learned that she was liked by everybody, but she was overworked, and had not been able to take a

vacation for thirteen months. As she was the only trained nurse in the place at the time she had charge of all the patients and directed the other nurses. She was, as a general thing, called up several times each night and had been under a severe strain for months.

This woman could be believed. She had seen Dean Bridgman Conner die. She was with him at the time. She had closed his eyes after death and she thought so much of the young man that she would not permit his body to be taken to the morgue until the place had been properly prepared to receive it.

Then again she and her assistants and the doctor were the only persons who had a right to enter that young man's room, owing to the fact that he had a contagious disease.

As far as I could see Mrs. Winn's statement ended all the mystery about Dean Bridgman Conner's death. It satisfied me; but there were several things yet to be settled before those most interested in the fate of the young man would be satisfied.

Mrs. Winn regretted that her husband was not at home. He had gone to Zataciro early in the day on horseback and was not expected back until late. She had lunch prepared for me, after which she had me dismiss my guide, saying that she would have the superintendent of the estate take me back to Tuxpan Junc-

tion by another and shorter route. At the moment I thought little of this, but it afterward dawned on me that she did it as a precautionary measure, because if I remember rightly I told her about the natives who had crossed our path on the way over. However, the guide was as inscrutable as ever when I dismissed him, and he trotted off without a murmur.

Before I started on the return trip the native superintendent showed me over a part of the estate around the hacienda, and he showed me such a variety of tropical and temperate fruits, vegetables and cereals as I had never seen before and as I never supposed it possible could be grown in one place. It was one of the most fertile spots I had ever seen.

The ride back to Tuxpan Junction was without incident. It was a pretty steady trot all the way back and took much less time than the trip over.

Altogether I wasn't gone on the trip more than eight hours. I crossed the mountains at a point several thousand feet above the Mexican plateau. The fortunate part of it was that the little mining road went so far and so high as it did. This fact saved me probably several days of horseback riding.

CHAPTER XXI

Physically I was tired after my ride and work of the day but mentally I felt exhilarated — the exhilaration that goes with accomplishment. As well water was plenty at the hotel, I had a good wash, after which I found a chair and planted it outside the door of my room on the little platform.

It was a delightful afternoon. There was a hum of bees in the air; butterflies flitted about; a rooster occasionally crowed, and the human note was not missing for I could hear a baby crying in one of the freight cars. The mountain peaks looked very solemn and very grand on all sides, but I was not in a mood consciously to enjoy that sort of thing. I was in a thinking mood. I wanted to review in quiet the work of the day and the impression Mrs. Winn had made on me.

So I lit a cigar and sat there in the shadow of the shack reviewing the day's work, and from that I thought over my whole trip from Boston to this out-of-the-way place which I had never heard of until a few days previously. I felt that I had finished my work in Mexico. I was completely satisfied that Dean Bridgman Conner had died of typhoid fever in the American hospital and that his body had been interred in the American cemetery. All of my

investigations in the City of Mexico pointed to that conclusion but my conversation with Mrs. Winn assured me of the fact.

One might naturally ask: Why so confident of her? For the same reason one has confidence in anybody. A child could see that the woman was telling the truth, and subsequent investigations into some of her statements proved this. She had no reason to lie.

But what next? How about the expert testimony in regard to the teeth that had been taken from the upper jaw of the skull when Mr. Dodge had the body in grave 559 of the American cemetery exhumed; and the hair that had been cut from the skull; and the photographs that had been taken of the skull? Experts had pronounced against these, and this was apparently a very grave stumbling block against my own conviction that the young man was dead. The conclusions of the scientific experts who had examined the hair and teeth would have more weight with most people than all my investigations and conclusions.

This annoyed me but I decided to face these experts when I got back. I did not then know how I would combat their conclusions. They were professional men, I was only a newspaper man, and my opinion would have little weight against theirs. I decided, however, not to bother myself about that side of the

question until I returned to Boston. And as I sat there on the little platform I thought over what Mr. Boss had said to me that night before the train reached Zacatecas, about mind reading. But I could not yet make his theory wholly fit the case in hand. The thing that bothered me most was how Mrs. Piper could so accurately describe that scene from the Zaragoza statue on the hill of Guadalupe at Puebla. That was a mystery, for the time being at least.

I must have been sitting on the platform an hour when I noticed a horseman coming up one of the mountain roads at a pretty good gait. This proved to be Vaughan returning from work. He rode up to his car, turned the horse over to his Mexican servant, waved his hand and disappeared, only to reappear a little later and join me. We waited until the train arrived from Maravatio and then had supper, after which we spent another pleasant evening in his car.

I told him about the natives crossing the path during my ride and their disappearance in the underbrush. He explained that there were many paths through the brush which these natives knew and followed from place to place. The ones I saw were evidently going either to Zataciro or to join the procession I had seen.

He was pleased that I had found Mrs. Winn and he was much interested in what I told him about her. He agreed that it was reasonable to suppose she knew what she was talking about.

I retired earlier this night and slept soundly. I relaxed somewhat the tension which I had been under for some time. Vaughan said he would call me before daylight so that I could get a glimpse of the Southern Cross. It was about five o'clock when he called me for the purpose and the famous constellation could be seen just above the mountainous horizon line. I cannot say that I was very deeply impressed by the constellation at the time. It is probably very beautiful if seen from a point farther south and when it is higher up in the sky. The whole sky interested me a little later, however, when the rose tints of dawn began to sweep up from the east and obliterate the stars and touch the mountains, which seemed to come out of a gray mist. It was a picture never to be forgotten.

We strolled around until breakfast was ready and shortly after I bade Vaughan, with much regret, good-bye, and departed from Tuxpan Junction on the train for Maravatio and thence for the City of Mexico, where I arrived in the evening.

On the way down the mountains the train

stopped at the Angangueon mine and hitched on a couple of cars which were said to be loaded with rich and valuable ore. I had a glimpse of the entrance to the mine, where there were a number of armed men on duty. Some of them had old-fashioned, pearl-handled, decorated revolvers, as big as blunderbusses, in their belts. A heavily armed guard of six men got on the train, presumably to protect the precious cars of ore. The train reached Maravatio without incident. After dinner I took the train for the City of Mexico.

The next day I called on Judge Sepulveda and told him what I had done. He pretended to be astonished and told me how foolish I had been. I think, however, that he suspected I would locate Mrs. Winn before I got through or he would not have given me that letter. The Judge, as I have said, had an idea that I was a United States secret service man — as did the Consul-General — who had been sent down to clear up this case. The letter from Secretary Olney would give this impression. I did not disclose my identity to either of them.

After a few days spent in the city, sightseeing, and looking up some further details in regard to Dean Bridgman Conner's movements, I started for the United States and home early on a Sunday morning. For the

first time since my arrival in Mexico the sky was overcast and the air somewhat chilly on the plateau. The previous evening I had bid good-bye to the few acquaintances I had made in the city. Mr. Boss was out of town, so I did not see him on the eve of my departure.

There were few people in the railroad station when I started on my return trip. In fact, there were few people on the train until we reached the Rio Grande.

I arrived at New Orleans in time to witness the picturesque Mardi Gras festival, and in Washington on the night of President McKinley's first inauguration. The next morning I woke up somewhere down in Delaware, where the train I was in had been stalled in front of a freight wreck for several hours. I got into New York in the afternoon and into Boston that night and had a talk with the managing editor, Mr. A. A. Fowle.

After relating to him some of my experiences and my conclusion in regard to the case, he asked the very natural question: "What are you going to do about the expert testimony?"

I told him I saw nothing to do but face it and investigate that, too. He smiled. That seemed preposterous; but I decided to go to Burlington, Vt., the next day and see the experts.

CHAPTER XXII

The next morning I started for Burlington and arrived there in the evening. I had telegraphed Mr. Dodge and he met me at Essex Junction. I firmly believe he thought I had Dean Bridgman Conner with me, for he seemed a little disappointed. My telegram simply stated that I was coming up on that particular train.

Arriving at Burlington we went to Mr. Dodge's house, where Dr. Sparhawk and Dean's father were waiting for me. Mrs. Dodge happened to be away at the time. During supper we discussed the entire case. I outlined what I had done, and during the course of the conversation I learned for the first time that both Mr. Dodge and Dr. Sparhawk had seen the Zaragoza statue, had been on the hill of Guadalupe, and had been in Puebla during the celebration incident to the unveiling of the statue, and that they were perfectly familiar with the scene looking across the city to the mountains.

Dr. Sparhawk, it will be remembered, returned from Mexico some time before Mr. Dodge, and on the day of his arrival in Boston he went with Dr. Hodgson to Mrs. Piper's

house in Arlington and had a "sitting" with her. Then for the first time she described this scene from the Zaragoza statue — the one Mexican scene probably most emphatically stamped on the mind of Dr. Sparhawk. This was news to me — that he had seen the statue and had had a "sitting" with Mrs. Piper. When Mr. Dodge returned Mrs. Piper also described the scene for him.

The following day I called on Dr. Joseph Lindsey, the expert who had examined the hair. He was regarded as one of the ablest physicians in Burlington. I went alone. I told him that I had been investigating the case of Dean Bridgman Conner in Mexico and as he had examined the hair that had been taken from the skull, I should very much like to know how he had arrived at the conclusion that it was not Dean Bridgman Conner's hair.

He said that in the first place he had known young Conner, whose hair was brown; the hair he had been given to examine was dark. Then again he had compared this hair with a lock that had been cut from the young man's head and which Mrs. Dodge had in her possession. The latter he found was non-pigmentary in character, while the hair that had been taken from the skull was pigmentary in character and was darker and coarser than

Dean Bridgman Conner's hair. These were the points on which he based his conclusion.

I then asked him if he was convinced in his own mind that the young man had had typhoid fever while in the American hospital. Yes, he was. He had seen the hospital chart, which, he said, had been very well kept. I then said to the doctor:

"When I was about fourteen years old I had typhoid fever. When I went to bed my hair was very light in color. This hair all fell out and the new growth was much darker in color, in fact it was brown. Now, doctor, isn't it a fact that in extreme cases of typhoid fever a pigmentary change takes place in the hair? And further," I continued, "you must bear in mind that this body had been in the ground for about a year before it was exhumed, and, as I understand it, the hair that grows immediately after death is always coarse."

He looked up at the ceiling in a thoughtful way, and then as if speaking to himself said: "That's so," and nodded his head several times.

"Then," said I, "I don't see, doctor, as your former opinion or decision is worth much in this case if it was founded merely on what you have just stated."

He started and looked sharply at me but

made no reply, and we both arose and walked toward the door. I bade him good day and departed.

I then hunted up the dentist who had examined the front teeth that had been taken from the upper jaw of the skull. I asked him how he had arrived at his conclusion regarding the teeth. He said he had based his opinion on the "recession" of the gums. I then asked him when he had last seen Dean Bridgman Conner's teeth. He thought it was seven or eight years before the young man's death. Then he had made a chart.

It might be well to explain here that "recession" in this sense means the angle at which the teeth are inserted into the jawbone.

I said to the dentist that when I had studied anatomy I learned that the bone formation of the body did not attain its normal growth and size until between the twenty-fifth and thirtieth years of a person's life, and that during the period of growth and thereafter the upper jawbone was apt to change its character and its angle more emphatically than any other bone in the body, especially in regard to the recession of the gums.

He admitted this. So I told him that I did not see how his opinion could be regarded as conclusive or could have any weight under

the circumstances, especially as he had not examined the young man's teeth for so many years — years of growth and change in the bone structure. He admitted that there was room for doubt.

I could scarcely conceal the contempt I felt for opinions that had been founded on such weak and almost absurd premises, but which had been given — or used — with all the positiveness of scientific certainty and authority.

I next examined the photographs of the skull. These had been taken with an old-time kodak and a poor lens, which could not possibly focalize a curved object like a skull. Such an object should have been photographed with a rectilinear lens, one that would bring all the curves into proper relations. Further, these photographs were slightly out of focus. They were of no use whatever.

Here then were the expert opinions which had given so much strength to Mrs. Piper's statements, and to the dream behind it all. When analyzed, even by a layman, they were not worth anything. There were no foundations, in fact, for them.

CHAPTER XXIII

Now come some rather curious things as a result of my investigations and conclusions. From the standpoint of the newspaper ideals of the time my mission to Mexico had not been the kind of success that was anticipated. I was expected to bring back Dean Bridgman Conner — alive! That would have been a great exploit — a sensation! In point of fact most anybody could have done that — if Dean Bridgman Conner were alive. There wasn't anybody any more disappointed than myself when I found that he was not alive.

From a newspaper standpoint, or any other standpoint, the case was a great mystery because it involved dreams and the very latest kind of scientific investigation and speculation (and in some respects the oldest) along psychical research lines; and because it also involved the most eminent clairvoyant medium in the world — Mrs. Leonora E. Piper — the one clairvoyant medium in whom scholars and eminent men of science in several countries had become definitely interested. Her strange powers had first amazed Prof. William James of Harvard University and his amazement was no greater than that of the

most eminent psychologists and scientists of Europe who had studied and investigated her on the recommendation of Prof. William James. Mrs. Piper had been studied by Frederic W. H. Myers, Sir Oliver Lodge, Professor Richet, Andrew Lang, Flammarion, Dr. Alfred Wallace, Paul Bourget, Prof. Henry Sidgwick, Edmund Gurney, Professor Hyslop, and others, and several of these were of the opinion that while she was in the trance state she had the power of communication with spirits of the known and unknown dead. Dr. Richard Hodgson was positive of it. So, naturally, it was expected that my mission to Mexico under the guidance of so celebrated a medium would be productive of one of the greatest sensations of the age.

But at the time it did not occur to many people that important as the finding of Dean Bridgman Conner alive might have been, it was almost of equal importance, if he were dead, to discover exactly how he had died and whether or not he had died in the American hospital in the City of Mexico, and whether or not he had been buried in the American cemetery near the hospital.

If it could be proved beyond dispute that he was alive all doubts in regard to the assumption that Mrs. Piper while in the trance state held communication with the spirits of the dead

must disappear, for the evidence in this case would be conclusive. But if, on the other hand, it could be proved or demonstrated that he had died in the American hospital as the natural result of his illness, and that his body had been interred in the American cemetery, the facts involved in such proof might give a definite clue to the mystery that attached to the strange clairvoyant information which Mrs. Piper has always given while in the trance state, and which has baffled, and still baffles, so many eminent investigators. For this was the first important case in psychical research in which a really complex problem had been given Mrs. Piper to solve and in which it was possible to take the definite information that she gave and prove it either right or wrong. And after all, truth is the most important thing in any investigation.

In this particular case the data, or information, furnished through Mrs. Piper and Dr. Hodgson happens to be susceptible of analysis; and all of the facts in the case are so clear that there is no particular difficulty in examining and comparing her clairvoyant statements with the known facts and arriving at definite conclusions. The doubts which formerly existed concerning the entire truth of the facts that were unearthed in the course of my investigation have all disappeared. No evidence to

disprove any of these facts has come to light.

In the meantime, also, the ideas involved in psychical research have become more familiar to the general public. The literature on the subject is more extensive and of a more easily understandable character than it was at the time of the investigation. In fact the subject of psychical research, and its bearings, has been given a literary expression which, though not always very clear, has had the effect of awakening public consciousness on the whole matter, and of bringing it into a wider field of speculation.

So perhaps it is not surprising that the results of this investigation should have been received at the time with some bewilderment as well as incredulity by many people. Dr. Hodgson was both astonished and disappointed. He went into a veritable "blue funk" over the matter. He railed at my first brief newspaper article on the matter and he ridiculed the whole of my work on the case. And finally he said that if he had the means he himself would go to Mexico and find Dean Bridgman Conner — alive — and bring him back to his father and mother. He was certain Mrs. Piper's information was correct.

This was a pretty flat challenge to me, although he did not make it to me personally. He made this statement to a reporter who

had been sent from the *Globe* to interview him or get his opinions on the matter, after the first instalment of my newspaper articles had been printed.

Of course it did look like presumption on the part of a newspaper man even to seem to contradict Mrs. Piper — or her "controls." And as Dr. Richard Hodgson had a splendid reputation as an investigator of psychic phenomena it was not surprising that his statements and conclusions regarding my investigations should find favor with many of the members and associates of the Society for Psychical Research, and with many newspaper men. For, looked at broadly, psychical research seemed then altogether too subtle and mysterious a proposition for a layman to tackle.

However, I knew what I had done, and I knew, as nobody else knew, how much of time, thought and study I had put into the case. I had worked on it for months to the exclusion of all other things — for the greater part of five months — including my studies and investigation in the whole field of psychical research. And I was so thoroughly satisfied I was right that I did not propose to let Dr. Hodgson's statement go unchallenged or unnoticed. So I went to Gen. Charles H. Taylor, proprietor of the *Globe*, and asked him if he would be willing to defray Dr. Richard Hodg-

son's expenses to Mexico so that he might rescue Dean Bridgman Conner — as he said he would if he had the means — and restore the young man, alive, to his parents and friends.

General Taylor consented to defray Dr. Hodgson's expenses, and that fact was published. But Dr. Hodgson was either not very serious in his statement, or he cared very little whether Dean Bridgman Conner suffered in captivity, or whether the young man's parents and friends suffered because of this enforced captivity, or whether Mrs. Piper was right or wrong; for he never accepted General Taylor's offer, nor did he ever make any attempt to go to Mexico to clear up the mystery.

But he did continue to insist that I was wrong, and he said some things which were not very gracious, and for which he afterwards apologized to me. That was about two years later, after he had, through correspondence, done some investigating of my work in Mexico. He had apparently been able to satisfy himself that I was right, and he was heartily ashamed of the statements he had made about my work. I am sure it was a great shock to him, for he felt certain Mrs. Piper was right. In fact, so certain was he that he had a long report on the case ready to print, which he was obliged to destroy.

Nor were all of the people in Burlington, Vt., satisfied with my conclusions, although Dean Bridgman Conner's mother wrote me and thanked me for what I had done. In her letter she said she had never seriously doubted that her boy was dead, and she also said — something I did not know until then — that Mr. Dodge had wired the young man's father, after the body in the American cemetery had been exhumed, saying that he feared Dean slept in the American cemetery.

Some months after my return from Mexico I happened to be in Burlington and saw Mrs. Dodge, and she told me she had learned that I had not been thirteen days in Puebla and vicinity as I had stated. At the time, curiously enough, I had on a vest that I had worn in Mexico, and while looking through the pockets that morning I had found, in the inside pocket, my itemized and receipted bill from the Hotel Jardin in Puebla, covering thirteen days, and I showed it to her. After looking at it, she simply said she wished I had never gone to Mexico.

I am not sure but even then she believed Dean Bridgman Conner was alive and — by some curious process of reasoning — that my visit to Mexico had simply made it impossible for anybody to find the young man. Dr. Hodgson, I learned, had taken refuge from further responsibility in the matter on the

ground that the "controls" were incensed at what I had done and written. They would have nothing more to do with the case. So he wouldn't. The question of humanity that was involved apparently did not bother either the spirits or Dr. Hodgson. They were more concerned about the ethics of the case than they were about the life or death of Dean Bridgman Conner. All this seems very petty now, but it was considered of much moment by these people, and others, at the time.

The fact of the matter was that the effort to disprove my assertions and conclusions took up so much of the thought and attention of Dr. Hodgson and others that they lost sight of Dean Bridgman Conner. And I think Dr. Hodgson was also rather sorely disappointed when he found that he could not substantiate his opinions about me. He very foolishly made statements — positive statements — which came back on him in a variety of ways. Time, which he thought would prove his assertions, only served to vindicate my work. Time, which he thought would prove Mrs. Piper right, didn't prove anything of the kind. Time, which he thought would prove Dean Bridgman Conner alive, only proved that he was dead and that he had died in the American hospital in the City of Mexico on the fifteenth of March, 1895.

CHAPTER XXIV

The time has now come to look the facts of this entire case in the face, analyze them and make some reasonable, common-sense deductions from them.

In the first place it should be clear that I have no quarrel with psychical research. I heartily sympathize with any research that has for its object progress in knowledge and I should not wish to be regarded as one who had any desire to retard or make light of research in the field of psychic phenomena. On the contrary, I should like to feel that in this case I have been able to aid rather than retard such research. As I unravelled the mystery that appeared to surround the death of Dean Bridgman Conner my aim was to get at the exact truth. And I take it that all those who are interested in psychical research also desire nothing but the truth, no matter how unpleasant it may be, or how disappointing to hopes and expectations. In the pursuit of such truth personal feelings must be ignored and personal considerations should not be permitted to enter.

I have no theories to offer regarding Mrs. Piper, except in so far as she figures in this

particular case, although I am not insensible to the fact that the deductions which it is possible to make from this case may apply to others in which she is concerned. I fully realize that psychic phenomena such as her whole case presents cannot easily be explained from the facts obtained in one investigation, even though that investigation seems to include most, if not all, of the clairvoyant resources of Mrs. Piper.

I know this case pretty thoroughly and I have pondered over it for a long time. I have waited in the hope that Mrs. Piper, or Dr. Hodgson, or somebody would shed some new light on the matter, or explain why it was that Mrs. Piper and her "controls" were so persistently misled in the case and were so palpably wrong in what might be termed their "occult information."

As Dr. Hodgson, since his death, is said to have been in communication, through mediums, with some of his living friends, I had hoped he might throw some light on the matter; but he hasn't. In none of his alleged post mortem contributions to psychical research that I have seen is this case mentioned. And yet I am very sure it is one of the things that bothered Dr. Hodgson considerably for some years prior to his death in 1905.

Dr. Hodgson was undoubtedly a courageous

investigator, but for some reason he avoided this case — except with a few intimate friends — after he found that Mrs. Piper's statements could not be substantiated. It completely upset him for a time, for he had confidently expected that this dramatic case would furnish all the proof necessary to convince the world of the truth of the spiritistic theory of immortality. He was the strongest of all the believers in spiritism.

He had hoped to thrill the world with a new Revelation through what might almost be regarded as a miracle. Christianity and the old religions with their ideas of immortality and their hopes and fears regarding a future life were all to be relegated to the limbo of useless things in the presence of a proved and demonstrated spiritism and an immortality which should have the backing and authority of scientific method in its presentation to the world. The mental and moral attitudes of the world were going to be changed by a new revolution, for the great mysteries of life and death were to be revealed clearly, explicitly — scientifically.

It was surely a calamity to have such a great dream shattered in a moment along with that other dream from the fabric of which the whole Dean Bridgman Conner case started. But the appalling thing about it

was that it would also shatter and crumble the hopes of thousands of intelligent people the world over who were confidently looking to Dr. Hodgson to give clear and unequivocal proof of the spiritistic theory. There is no doubt but it was the fear of this shock, and the fear of the complications which any explanation would involve him in, that decided Dr. Hodgson in his published reports to preserve a studious silence in regard to this case. He could not easily explain the matter. The facts in the case would contradict his spiritistic theory and would surely weaken faith in Mrs. Piper and her "controls." At best it would place both her and the "controls" in the category of uncertainties. And finally in the confusion and wreck that must ensue from the publication of this case would perish his own life work. He would be discredited.

Then it was that he did the thing which he afterwards confessed to me he regretted — he attempted to discredit me and my work in the case. I was merely a sensational newspaper man. I had concocted my story out of my imagination. At one time it was a question in his mind if I had ever been to Mexico. And there were many who believed him, because he was rated as one of the foremost investigators in the field of psychic phenomena and I was merely a newspaper man. No further proof was

necessary — in the minds of a good many people.

Naturally I resented this off-hand and indifferent method of attempting to dispose of the results of my own hard work in the case. So I went to the annual meeting of the American Branch of the Society for Psychical Research and publicly asked Dr. Hodgson if he had any new facts on the Dean Bridgman Conner case. He said he had not. Then I challenged him to contradict my evidence. He had nothing to say.

Nor did he have anything to say to me until about two years had elapsed, when he apologized to me personally for some of the things he had said about me. Among other things he said, "I didn't know you were this kind of a newspaper man."

But in the meantime he had investigated me and had ample evidence that I had been in Mexico; and he also found that Mrs. Piper, for some unknown reason, had been misinformed by her "controls." He didn't blame the "controls," but there must have been something wrong with Mrs. Piper. He could offer no reasonable explanation of Mrs. Piper's errors in the case.

I pointed out to him that it might easily be explained from the standpoint of telepathy or mind reading. He said he had long ago rejected telepathy as an explanation of Mrs. Piper's powers.

I then pointed out to him that on the basis of mind reading her information in regard to this particular case could be divided into three distinct groups or classes. Into one class would fit the truths and facts about Dean Bridgman Conner that were previously well known to Mr. Dodge and the people in Burlington, Vt. These facts were all brought out at "sittings" at which Mr. Dodge was present. Then came a class of statements that might be traced to the suspicions in the mind of Mr. Dodge, or in the mind of Dr. Hodgson himself. And finally came the class of statements like the description of the scene looking from the Zaragoza statue that could surely be traced to actual visual impressions in the mind of some one present. Dr. Hodgson would not accept any such classification, nor my theory based on this suggestion. And he offered none himself.

Then in a most casual and indifferent way he said a thing which showed how completely absorbed his mind had become in the spiritistic idea. He said that for a long time he had regulated his own life on the advice and suggestions of George Pelham — one of Mrs. Piper's best-known and most reliable "controls" — and that his general health and bodily vigor had been much improved since he had followed that advice. I was going to

ask him if in such a case a person's own feelings and thoughts on the subject — the kind of feelings and thoughts that would come under the head of conscience — might not be given back by the medium and thus gain such an added strength and force as would result in conviction and action.

But I didn't ask this question for I saw it would only lead into a labyrinth that would be fruitless in results. I pointed out to him the importance of following this case to its logical conclusion, and he said he had lost interest in it, as he was convinced there was something wrong with Mrs. Piper during the time she had given "sittings" on the case.

But how about the other cases she worked on during the same time, some of which have been published as important contributions to psychical research? He only smiled and said that these cases appeared to be all right.

The absurdity of this answer did not strike me at the time. Of course the answer would seem to imply that Dr. Hodgson was a little partial in the selection of his evidence. But frankly that phase of the thing did not occur to me then.

So Dr. Hodgson gave up the case. I will attempt to explain the puzzle. But first there are a few things I would like to make clear about psychical research.

CHAPTER XXV

In most of the practical affairs of life I am from the metaphorical state of "Missouri," where the passwords to citizenship are "Show me," or, "Prove to me," as they are likewise the challenges to candor. At the very threshold of this state the philosopher, prophet, quack, speculator or pretender of any kind is asked to "show" his "hand."

But I should add that my personal citizenship in this great state of "Missouri" is governed by some mental reservations in regard to many things that may not appear to concern the practical affairs of life. These reservations are born of the acquired knowledge that things in this world are not always "what they seem," and although I am aware of the danger of telling any "Missourian" that his mental mechanism may not be able to stand the strain of thinking before it is oiled up with knowledge, yet I venture to suggest that some of the most potent factors in our modern civilization, on its material side, are as mysterious in origin as the dream which Mr. Conner had, the illusions of an opium fiend, or any of the abnormal psychic phenom-

ena which those engaged in psychical research have been investigating.

When in his normal state, at least, the man from "Missouri," like all other men, has limitations of the senses and consequently of the understanding, and he is very much the creature of his own habits of thought. And of course any man is liable to be narrow when the only metaphysical abstraction he indulges in is the virtue of self-complacency. The senses we have don't, as a rule, much more than meet the requirements of our actual wants.

For instance, let us consider a few commonplaces! You from "Missouri" have such poor eyesight that you cannot possibly see through a piece of inch plank without the aid of the X-Ray. Further limitations of this sense of sight are realized when you look through a telescope or a microscope. Consider the telephone and think of the limitations of the sense of hearing through the ear alone. But the strange thing about it is that you cannot see the electric force by means of which the telephone is operated, or the electric light made to glow. No more can you see the steam that drives the engine until it comes in contact with air, when you see only vapor. Nor can you see the disturbed air that uproots trees in its violence and creates terror —

the same air that arouses feelings of contentment when it is calm. You see the evidences of force — that is all.

Now I just want to disturb your "Missourian" complacency long enough to make clear the fact that it is not the part of wisdom to scorn the unseen or ignore the unaccountable; nor to assume that things "are not" because you don't happen to understand them.

This brings me to the really wonderful work that has been done for the world by the Society for Psychical Research which was organized in England in 1882 by a group of eminent men headed by the late Frederic W. H. Myers, whose work, "Human Personality," set the world thinking along new lines when it was published. This society has dared enter a field of research that had been scorned by scientists and jeered at by the unthinking. The object was to secure, if possible, evidence of such obscure psychical phenomena as had been considered outside the pale of traditional science and beneath the dignity of academic investigation.

In that field a great pioneer work has already been done by the members, but like all pioneer work it has not been wholly free from mistakes nor from the errors incident to over-enthusiasm. The mistakes and errors, however, have been trivial and insignificant compared

with the mistakes made during the progress and growth of physical science.

This society, in conjunction with the American branch that was subsequently founded, had the courage to investigate dreams, mesmerism or hypnotism, thought reading, thought transference, telepathy at various distances, automatic writing, unconscious muscular action, apparitions, illusions, crystal gazing, supernormal perception, the divining rod, the physical phenomena of spiritualism, and other matters in the realm which Professor Barrett describes as "that debatable borderland between the territory already conquered by science and the dark realms of ignorance and superstition."

No one of its members was more serious or enthusiastic in the work than Dr. Richard Hodgson, secretary of the American branch of the society, but I am inclined to think there was considerable truth in a remark Prof. William James made to me one time when we were speaking about this case: "I'm afraid Hodgson has permitted himself to be swept from his moorings by Mrs. Piper" — meaning that his enthusiasm over Mrs. Piper had weakened his judgment in psychical research. Concerning the case itself he simply said with a smile: "Evidently somebody made a mistake." He had read my newspaper ac-

count of the case and said he would like to see it written out in more detail. Unfortunately he died before I had it in shape to show him.

Certainly there were no mental reservations in Dr. Hodgson's belief in Mrs. Piper when he wrote that "the chief communicators are veritably the personalities that they claim to be, and that they have survived the change we call death."

He is not the only one entertaining this belief. So profound a student as Prof. W. P. Barrett of Trinity College in summing up the evidence afforded by Mrs. Piper and other "automatic writers" says:

"Certainly for our own part we believe there is some active intelligence at work behind, and apart from, the automatist; an intelligence which is more like the deceased person it professes to be than that of any other we can imagine. And though the intelligence is provokingly irritating in the way it evades simple, direct replies to questions, yet it is difficult to find any other solution to the problem of these scripts and cross-correspondences than that there is an attempt at intelligent co-operation between certain disembodied minds and our own."*

Other eminent men who became similarly convinced were the late William T. Stead,

*Psychical Research. By W. P. Barrett, F.R.S.

Dr. Alfred R. Wallace, Edmund Gurney, Professor Hyslop and Sir Oliver Lodge. The latter, who is well known for his wonderful work in physical science, and especially in wireless telegraphy, in commenting on some alleged communications from the late Frederic W. H. Myers, says:

"He [the scientific explorer] feels secure and happy in his advance only when one and the same hypothesis will account for everything — both old and new — which he encounters. The one hypothesis which seems to me most nearly to satisfy that condition in this case is that we are in indirect touch with some part of the surviving personality of a scholar, and that scholar, F. W. H. Myers."

Many others might be cited but these are sufficient to show that Dr. Hodgson was not alone in his belief in spiritism. Prof. William James told me that he himself had never been fully convinced and that there was room for doubt in the evidence that had been advanced to prove spiritism.

I have always regretted that the Society for Psychical Research did not make some effort to investigate the late Dr. Andrew Jackson Davis, the man who first gave literary expression to the phenomena of modern spiritism, or spiritualism, and whose first book, "Nature's Divine Revelations," is one of the

curiosities of literature and has only been equalled in its scope and character by some of Swedenborg's writings. It was printed in 1847, about ten years before Darwin published the "Origin of Species" and the theory of evolution. In Davis's book, however, is a very complete outline of both cosmic and universal evolution. But the most remarkable thing about that book of nearly eight hundred quarto pages is the fact that the author was only twenty years old, and it was written from his dictation, and in the presence of attested witnesses, while he was in the trance state. He was the son of a poor shoemaker in western New York. He had been obliged to work from childhood, and had only the barest rudiments of an education. Yet in this book he discusses and explains pretty much everything in the heavens and the earth. But that is only one of a great number of books he wrote. He too said that the spirits of the dead operated through him when he was in the trance state.

I knew Dr. Andrew Jackson Davis slightly during the latter years of his life. He retired from active public connection with spiritualism about twenty-five years before he died. During the preceding quarter of a century he had been the dominating force in spiritualism in this country. In his latter years he practised

medicine very quietly and in an unusual way. He had the use of a little room in the rear of a drug store on Warren Avenue, Boston, where he met his patients, went into a trance, diagnosed their cases, and if they needed medicine he mixed them some herb medicines of his own devising. In middle life he took up the study of medicine, went to a medical college, and got a degree.

I had a curious personal experience with Dr. Andrew Jackson Davis, three years before he died, which though irrelevant in a sense, is yet of interest to psychical research as an example of what might be termed "prevision."

Professor Lutoslowsky of the University of Cracow was at that time delivering a course of lectures on "Poland" at the Lowell Institute, and he was the guest of Prof. William James in Cambridge. In point of fact Professor Lutoslowsky was one of the most distinguished psychologists of Europe, but was a good deal of a mystic. He was a Pole and a Roman Catholic, and one of the predictions he made in his course of lectures at the time was that inside of ten years there would be a great war among the nations of Europe out of which Poland would emerge once more as an independent nation.

At either the first or second of the lectures I met Professor James and he invited me to his

home to meet Professor Lutoslowsky with the object of writing a newspaper interview to help stimulate a larger public interest in the lectures. Incidentally he told me what a remarkable man Professor Lutoslowsky was as a scholar and a linguist. I called at Professor James's house the next day and in the course of our talk the three of us somehow drifted into a discussion of psychical research, and I asked Professor Lutoslowsky if he had ever heard of Dr. Andrew Jackson Davis. He didn't catch the name at first and he asked me to repeat it. Then he thought for a moment and said:

"Yes, I have read his books. He was the first man to give literary expression to modern spiritualism. He was a wonderful man, but he died a good many years ago."

When I assured him that Dr. Davis was alive at the time both he and Professor James were astonished, for the latter had also read some of the works of Dr. Andrew Jackson Davis, and thought him dead. Then Professor Lutoslowsky said: "I must see him. I would rather meet him than any man in America."

So I made an appointment with Dr. Davis, and two days later I took Professor Lutoslowsky to the little office in the rear of the drug store on Warren Avenue, and introduced him to the man he would rather meet "than any man in America."

They looked at each other for a moment as they clasped hands and then Professor Lutoslowsky exclaimed: "Why, you are Swedenborg!"

"Yes, I am," said Dr. Davis in a most off-hand way as he turned to place a bottle on one of the shelves. Professor Lutoslowsky was speechless for some moments and I stood there looking at them both, to see if they were joking. But no, they were both very serious and silent. Then Professor Lutoslowsky said:

"How long are you going to remain with us?"

"Let me see," said Dr. Davis as he looked thoughtfully about the little room. "I have chores enough to do that will take me about three years. About three more years and then I'll be ready to go." And he went on arranging his bottles again very calmly.

"Chores? chores?" said Professor Lutoslowsky with a puzzled look on his face, "What do you mean by chores?" It was evidently a new word to him.

Dr. Davis explained that he meant work — work that would take him about three years to finish.

"Oh, now I understand," said Professor Lutoslowsky. "Then you are going to leave us in three years?"

The venerable Dr. Davis — he was then

about eighty years of age — nodded his head.

The whole thing made a rather curious impression on me at the moment, and I wondered if Professor Lutoslowsky really believed that Dr. Davis was a reincarnation of Swedenborg, and whether Dr. Davis believed it himself. But they were both very serious and I said nothing. They talked on a variety of subjects for about ten minutes and finally during a pause I said I wanted to ask them both a question. They both nodded their heads and I said:

"You are both men who have thought a good deal about life; you have been brought up and developed in widely different ways and almost on opposite ends of the world — I want to know what you both think of the question of immortality."

"It is the surest thing you know," said Professor Lutoslowsky promptly, and Dr. Davis said: "I wish I was as sure of everything in this world as I am of life in the hereafter."

One was a Roman Catholic; one a spiritualist — both agreed.

Now comes the "prevision." Dr. Davis died three years later, though not on the exact day.

My purpose in this chapter has been to show that my interest in psychical research has not been wholly casual and to further show that

the chief interest in this entire investigation into the death of Dean Bridgman Conner at present lies in the fact that it is, or should be, a valuable contribution to the whole work of psychical research — for certain obvious reasons.

CHAPTER XXVI

The case of Dean Bridgman Conner when looked at from the standpoint of Mrs. Piper and her "controls" resolves itself into a fairly simple proposition for a newspaper man; for among the many vague, rambling statements that were made at the various "sittings" are several which are clear and explicit. This is especially true of the description of the scene from the Zaragoza statue. If the fundamental premise were true — that Dean Bridgman Conner was alive — then this description should be the means of easily and definitely locating and rescuing him from his enforced captivity.

But as the fundamental premise was not true it is interesting to see how such a fabric of nonsense could have been woven out of "the shadow of a dream."

I do not dispute that there is much in the published "Piper Phenomena," aside from this case, which seems incomprehensible on the theory of mind reading, or telepathy, or thought transference in any way, but I do hold that this entire case falls under these heads — in so far as Mrs. Piper's connection with the case is concerned.

Although there is a difference in meaning,

these three terms are popularly supposed to mean, or relate to, the same thing. Telepathy implies thought transference at a distance and in this case it would almost seem as if such a thing occurred, although the clearest and most definite of the alleged information from Mrs. Piper came during what might be termed "contact sittings," or at least "sittings" during which an interested person, and one having some exact or nascent knowledge of the content of the information given, was present.

Of course the question will naturally arise: What is telepathy?

It was Emerson who said in his essay on "The Over-Soul": "As with events, so is it with thoughts. When I watch the flowing river, which, out of regions I see not, pours for a season its streams into me, I see that I am a pensioner; not a cause, but a surprised spectator of this ethereal water; that I desire and look up, and put myself in the attitude of reception, but from some alien energy the visions come."

In electricity and wireless telegraphy we may speculate about the known power necessary to transmit energy over a given space, but evidently in the field of telepathy — if we admit such a thing — there are unknown secrets of power which science may yet be

able to fathom. For after one reads the evidence which the Society for Psychical Research has produced on the phenomena there is little room for doubt that such a thing is possible.

Some of the clearest cases of telepathy — cases that were premeditated and worked out knowingly for the purpose of establishing positive proof — are to be found in the published Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research for 1906, 1907 and 1908. Of these the most remarkable are the series of experiments made by Miss H. Ramsden and Miss C. Miles. These experiments were conducted at varying distances from twenty miles to one thousand miles, and although they were not uniformly successful some of them were remarkably so, and all were timed by prearrangement. Neither of these young women was in the trance state, however, and it is not recorded of either of them that the thought, impression or idea which was sent by the one and received by the other was transmitted by a third factor in the guise of a spirit. Miss Miles acted as the sender or "agent" in these experiments and Miss Ramsden as the receiver or "percipient."

In considering telepathy one cannot easily get away from the idea suggested by wireless telegraphy, and that thought waves might

be transmitted in a similar way if the brain could be regarded as a sort of dynamo. But unfortunately the physical laws which govern the transmission of electrical energy by means of wireless apparatus do not seem to apply to telepathy. In the transmission of electrical energy by wireless apparatus, through ether waves, the law of inverse ratios is all powerful — the farther it goes the weaker it gets. But in telepathy there is apparently no such law in operation. Some of the best telepathic messages, or impressions, have been received from those who were seriously ill or at the point of death. These messages or impressions were received by those having some degree of personal sympathy for, or acquaintance with, the sender. Perhaps the answer will be found in this thing we call "sympathy." However, that would mean a quality of force or power for the action of which we have no precedent in physics.

To a number of investigators, after much study and consideration, the only explanation is spiritism — that an invisible spirit takes the impression from one mind and conveys it to another. That, if it were true, could be made to account for a great variety of psychic phenomena, from "devils," and automatic writing, to telepathy and supernormal vision. But there are gaps and flaws in this theory

more mysterious than the gaps and flaws in the theory of evolution.

One of the greatest troubles with telepathy or mind reading, or thought transference of any kind, is the uncertainty of its operation, and the fact that the power is often best in people of little intellectual activity and of few intellectual resources. In fact the manifestations seem to be so irregular and erratic that no clear clue has been had to sufficient data from which to formulate a law that would seem to govern them — a law comparable in its workings to any known laws in the physical world. But of course the same was in a measure true of electricity up to the time Galvani, Volta, Faraday and Sir Humphrey Davies made their discoveries.

I conceive telepathy to be the transmission of occasional impressions between two minds that may be either under similar mental influences or that are in mental sympathy and harmony with each other at the moment. The more sensitive and sympathetic the minds the more definite the impressions. And I suppose the abnormal mental condition incident to the trance state makes the mind more susceptible at such times even to unconscious or what have come to be termed "subliminal impressions." The thought or picture in the mind of the person who is

termed the "agent" impinges apparently on the mind of the person known as the "percipient."

Mrs. Jessie Benton Fremont tells somewhere in her memoirs — it is many years since I read them — of being ill for a week or more in a friend's house in New York State. Her husband, General Fremont, was at the time, about 1846, on an exploring expedition beyond the Rocky Mountains. It was in the winter and he had not been heard from for some months. On this particular night the people with whom Mrs. Fremont was staying went to an entertainment and left her alone in the house. While lying on a sofa she thought she heard the voice of her husband, or at least she received an impression that he was safe and all right. The impression aroused her and she became cheerful and apparently well on the instant, much to the surprise of her friends on their return.

It subsequently transpired that at that moment General Fremont had seated himself in a room in a Utah Mormon settlement to write a letter to his wife in New York State. He and his soldiers and guides had been lost in the wilderness and the snowdrifts for more than a week previously and they had endured some very severe hardships during this time. Finally on this particular evening

they came upon a Mormon settlement and the Mormons provided for them. After seeing that his soldiers were properly cared for General Fremont went to his own room and the first thought that came to him was of his wife. So he proceeded to write to her and tell her of the miraculous escape of his exploring expedition that evening.

As this one instance made the first impression on me I cite it for that reason.

I will cite a rather peculiar incident that occurred to myself while in Mexico. One evening I was sitting in my room at the Hotel Iturbide in the City of Mexico when an impulse came over me to write a letter to a friend of mine in Connecticut whom I had not seen or written to for nearly three years. At about the same moment this friend, thinking that I was in Boston, sat down and wrote me a letter which I found on my return with another calling my attention to the fact that both of us had written on the same evening and at the same time. This and the case of Jessie Benton Fremont might be called strange coincidences or pure accidents, but if so they were somewhat remarkable. Of course one grave objection to telepathy is that the person receiving an impression has not such means of knowing exactly from whence it came, or of verifying it at the moment, as were had

in many of the examples cited in the reports of the Society for Psychical Research.

Although the complex influence of sex on mental energy opens a pretty wide field for investigation, yet I have often thought it would be a most interesting field. For there is no doubt that during the flood tide of maturity there is an aroused mental energy at times between the sexes which is often of a lofty, intellectual character, — as in the cases of Dante, Petrarch, Raphael, Shakespeare, Goethe and Napoleon. In these men it seems to have bordered on the abnormal. In fact it would seem as if men of fine imagination and great mental capacity reach their intellectual apogee through sex influence.

The mental organism, or the sensibilities of the woman, as a rule, seem to be more receptive at such a time than those of the man. She senses what is going on in the man's mind. The continuous force seems to lie in the man — he is the positive pole and the woman the negative, to use electrical terms.

The point I wish to make is that the best, or apparently the best, mediums are women. They are the real mind readers. In them lies apparently the greater power of receptivity; perhaps it might have something to do with the fact that in them lies the preponderance of the secret possibilities of life and regenera-

tion. And after all, the subtle forces that operate, surround and protect this regenerative purpose in nature are the primal forces in life and in civilization itself. Here enter the joys and sorrows, the pleasures and pains, and nearly the whole of the sum of the sensations that make life.

If you want to see mind reading watch a mother and her baby for a little while. The mental ecstasy of maternity is a state known to every mother. Then a new vesicle is opened in her brain, apparently. Then she has the finest intuitions. I notice that Mrs. Piper's apparent power came to her about the period of maternity.

The claim has been made by some very eminent men that Mrs. Piper's organism is an avenue of communication between the known dead and the living and that these communications are transmitted through other spirits, some known and some unknown, all of whom, however, are familiar to those who have had "sittings" with Mrs. Piper. Some of these spirits or "controls" are said to know how to use Mrs. Piper's organism while she is in the trance state and transmit communications from other spirits, not familiar with her organism, to the "sitter."

After years of investigation, as has been said, the only satisfactory ground which several

investigators have been able to take in regard to communications that apparently come through Mrs. Piper is that of spiritism — that these are communications from the known dead. The idea of telepathy although not openly scouted has been at least considered inadequate. Dr. Hodgson used to talk in a perfectly unconscious manner of his "communicators," as in the letter to the managing editor of the *Globe*, and as if it were the most natural thing in the world. This is exactly the way the ordinary spiritualist talks, but the spiritualist has no mental reservations about the matter.

CHAPTER XXVII

Now the facts in this particular case are simple. The "communicators" or "controls" that speak apparently through Mrs. Piper and that have so mystified scientific investigators are the same ones that apparently gave out all the information in regard to Dean Bridgman Conner and verified his father's weird dream. There were "Dr. Phinuit," "George Pelham," "Imperator," "Rector," "Home" or "Homer," "Moses," and the others.

It is clear then that these "controls" of Mrs. Piper gave the information in regard to Dean Bridgman Conner in Mexico. Nobody who reads the stenographic reports of the "sittings" can dispute that. So let us see, if possible, how this information was obtained and how far right the "controls" were.

In the first place, after Mr. Conner, the young man's father, had had the very vivid dream — in which his son appeared and said that he was not dead but was being detained in Mexico for ransom or some other dark purpose — he immediately related this dream to Mr. and Mrs. Dodge, both of whom were interested in spiritualism and such phenomena. Then again Mr. and Mrs. Dodge were very

deeply concerned about this young man, so much so, in fact, that they had already taken steps to learn the exact facts concerning his illness and death in Mexico, even before Mr. Conner had the vivid dream. Mrs. Dodge could not reconcile herself to the idea that the young man was dead. She had been suspicious from the beginning that something was wrong.

They obtained photographs of the hospital, became familiar with the officials, doctors, etc., in the hospital, and in addition they had had correspondence with Dean before his supposed death. They were familiar, through this correspondence, with nearly every detail of his trip to Mexico from New York and his work and much of his life after his arrival in the City of Mexico. They had corresponded with Consul-General Crittenden and others. They knew all about Dean's illness prior to and during some of the time he was in the hospital. They obtained the hospital chart which detailed his illness.

After the first communication with Dr. Hodgson in regard to the dream he asked for some of the young man's personal effects, for use during a "sitting" with Mrs. Piper. This "sitting" was fruitless. The "controls" apparently had never heard of Dean Bridgman Conner, so more "effects" were called for.

Then Mr. Dodge, who was considerably stirred up over the dream, came down from Burlington and in his possession were the letters from Mexico, the photographs of the young man and of the American hospital, in front of which stood the matron, doctors, nurses, etc., and finally there was his own sensitive mind full of suspicions. Mrs. Piper's "controls" had no difficulty at the next "sitting" which Mr. Dodge attended. They gave the young man's name, related his experiences during the trip from New York to Vera Cruz and thence to the City of Mexico, and to the circus in which he worked. They told of his illness and his trip to the hospital, his being kidnapped and another body put in his cot, which body was buried under the name of Dean Bridgman Conner, while the real Dean Bridgman Conner was taken away by the "south road" — whatever that meant. Mrs. Piper told Mr. Dodge what he already knew — what was on his mind, and things suggested by Mr. Conner's dream.

This was really as far as Mr. Dodge's actual knowledge and imagination could carry the young man at the time; but his knowledge and suspicions had been verified by one who was regarded as an authority. That was enough for him, and it was enough for the other interested persons in Burlington. Mrs.

Piper was unable to throw any further light on the matter at the time — owing to her illness, it was claimed. The "controls" were anxious that the body in grave 559 of the American cemetery should be exhumed to prove that they were right, a thought that would naturally come to anybody under the circumstances.

So Mr. Dodge went to Mexico and investigated. He found some things that disturbed him and that added to his suspicions. The Consul-General had not attended the funeral as he had said, and the room in the hospital which the Consul-General indicated on the photograph as the one in which Dean had died he found was not the room; instead the young man had died in one of the rooms in the contagious ward at the rear of the main building, as Mrs. Piper had stated.

It is possible, however, that Mr. Dodge might have learned previously, from some other source, of this ward in the rear of the hospital. So he was already more or less familiar with practically all of the real knowledge he had gained through Mrs. Piper. He succeeded in getting permission to have the body in grave 559 of the American cemetery exhumed, and after it had been exhumed he made up his mind that the body was that of Dean Bridgman Conner, and so wired the young man's father at the time — a fact which I

did not learn until long afterwards from the young man's mother. Teeth were taken from the upper jaw, as stated, hair was cut from the skull and the skull was photographed.

Then Mr. Dodge wired Dr. Hodgson for more light and Dr. Hodgson, after a "sitting" with Mrs. Piper, sent the mysterious telegram in which the "control," George Pelham, said that Dean had been taken to "Tuxedo"; and Phinuit said he had been taken along the "south road to a country house." This I think is the first evidence of anything that may be construed as telepathy in this case — mind reading at a distance.

And yet another factor should be considered right here — a factor which might eliminate telepathy and place the whole problem on the kind of mind reading that Mr. Boss told me about. That factor is Dr. Hodgson himself and his mental state from almost the beginning of the investigation. He must not be lost sight of, for two things must be considered in his connection with the case. One is that Mrs. Piper knew him like a book; she knew him better than he knew himself. And curiously enough he thought he knew her better than she knew herself. She was sensitive to his every mood and abnormally sensitive to him when she was in the trance state.

Then again Dr. Hodgson, though apparently

cool, was in reality a very excitable man, especially when he was deeply interested in a particular problem. He knew practically as much about this case as did Mr. Dodge — after a few "sittings" — and his active mind was figuring and imagining all kinds of strange possibilities. He studied Mexico in its relation to this case and he had many strange opinions about the country and the people, all tinged with the mystery and fantasy of the dream itself.

A close examination of the various "sittings" will reveal the high-tension mental state he was in. So it is entirely possible that what may seem like telepathy in this case was nothing but the reading or receiving of impressions from Dr. Hodgson's own mind; and the jumble of ideas may be a mixture of the opinions and suspicions of two or more minds that knew something about the case and happened to be present at the "sittings." Dr. Hodgson was present at, and directed, all of the "sittings," and as a rule he had one or more persons present who were interested in the case.

And finally it must be remembered that his interest in the case transcended that of any other person, for he hoped not only to find Dean Bridgman Conner, but to establish on a convincing basis, by means of this case, the doctrine of spiritism.

But to come back to Mr. Dodge. He was very much excited during this trip to Mexico, as well he might be, for he was carrying the burden of a great responsibility and he was suspicious of nearly everybody. Some people in the City of Mexico feared he would have nervous prostration or something worse. Among other things he had been studying the "south road" problem, and had learned of the railroad which runs to Puebla, also to Orizaba and Vera Cruz. On the basis of the Mexican architecture he had seen he had speculated on the kind of country house Dean was likely to be confined in, and altogether his mind was in a confused state.

He came back from Mexico with some definite knowledge of that country. He turned the hair and teeth over to experts. When these experts gave their conclusions Mr. Dodge's personal opinions regarding the body in the grave were smothered. Mrs. Piper and the dream were then backed up with the positive, scientific evidence of professional men well known in Burlington, Vt. That was enough.

Then, at "sittings" after his return, Mrs. Piper or her "controls" had been able to trace Dean to Puebla, a place which both Mr. Dodge and Dr. Hodgson had considered as one of the places to which Dean might have been taken — by the "south road." And the

building in which he was said to be confined answered in a general way the character of many of the country buildings that Mr. Dodge had observed while he was in Mexico. All the older Mexican haciendas are pretty much alike in their general architectural features.

So all that apparently was required was that some one should go to Puebla and institute a search. This he and Dr. Sparhawk did but without result. They saw, however, the Zaragoza statue, and knew the route to that statue. They had also felt some of the public excitement incident to the unveiling of that monument. But they couldn't find any trace of Dean in Puebla, so they were ordered by Dr. Hodgson to go to Orizaba; and then occurred that wonderful series of "sittings" which seem like telepathy at a distance — or spiritism — and which pointed to the fact that Dean Bridgman Conner was surely in Orizaba, about sixty miles east of Puebla.

Orizaba was the natural alternative in Dr. Hodgson's mind after the search in Puebla had proved futile.

I understand spirits have no conception of space and that they got confused, in this case, between Puebla and Orizaba — a little matter of sixty or seventy miles. Dr. Cintz's establishment was not in Puebla then, it was in Orizaba, and both Mr. Dodge and

Dr. Sparhawk, while searching Orizaba, were in the building, out of it, and near it at different times — judging from the "sittings" — but if they were, neither Mr. Dodge nor Dr. Sparhawk was aware of the fact and they never found any trace of either Dr. Cintz or his curious sanitarium in Orizaba.

No, Mr. Dodge was very much excited again, and so was Dr. Hodgson, and the Orizaba telegrams only tended to increase Mr. Dodge's excitement and confusion. Dr. Hodgson was sanguine that Dean would be found and Mrs. Piper's "controls" encouraged him in this belief. They gave him back his own excited feelings, thoughts and impressions about the matter at the moment. It was good mind reading on Mrs. Piper's part, but very poor psychical research on the part of Dr. Hodgson.

Then Dr. Sparhawk came back to Boston and he went at once to Arlington with Dr. Hodgson and had a "sitting" with Mrs. Piper — that famous "sitting" when she described the scene from the Zaragoza statue, looking across the city of Puebla to the snow-capped mountains. That was the first time this scene had been described and Dr. Sparhawk was familiar with it. He recognized it the moment she described it. Mr. Dodge returned soon after and Mrs. Piper, while in the trance state,

described for him practically the same scene, with which he too was familiar. Dean then was near Puebla, so were Dr. Cintz and his sanitarium. They were not in Orizaba — that must have been a mistake. But who made the mistake? The same "controls" that made all the other mistakes.

This time they must be right, however, for both Mr. Dodge and Dr. Sparhawk were familiar with the scene she described. If they had not seen the place I wonder if she could have described it. She told of the buildings on a hill. Nearly all large buildings or haciendas, in this part of the country especially, are on rises of ground, for reasons already explained, and nearly all the old haciendas are architecturally alike.

No, it was mind reading this time — a vivid impression taken at close range and not as vague as that based on Dr. Hodgson's suspicions. This was clear and definite. It was a faithful reproduction of the picture that was in the minds of the "sitters," and also somewhat of what was in Mr. Dodge's mind after his latest investigations in Mexico.

The "controls" could always tell something definite if somebody happened to be around who knew definitely that something, and apparently what was added were the suspicions of the same or some other mind present at the time.

The whole thing had reached an acute stage when I took it up. The failure of Mr. Dodge and Dr. Sparhawk did not in the least discourage those who were interested in the case. It raised no doubts as to the truth of Mr. Conner's dream, nor did it shake faith in Mrs. Piper. In the minds of some the failure was credited to a lack of skill on the part of the investigators.

Dr. Hodgson was more confident than ever that Dean Bridgman Conner would be found — alive. The young man had already been held in captivity more than eighteen months and, judging from the information obtained from the "controls," his captors had not in the least relaxed their vigilance. They had outwitted Mr. Dodge and Dr. Sparhawk in spite of the spirit "controls" that aided them in their search. It looked like a battle of wits between a cruel but astute Mexican doctor — Dr. Cintz — and the spirit "controls" of Mrs. Piper. There was something very uncanny about this Dr. Cintz.

So I went to Mexico, as full of the mystery in which the case appeared to be enshrouded as Mr. Dodge or anybody else, and just as confident that Mrs. Piper was right. I went to Puebla, found the Zaragoza statue where she said I would find it, and reached it by crossing the bridge on which the word "Zara-

goza" was cut. And the scene she described I found to be a perfect cameo of the real scene itself. There were the snow-capped mountains in the distance, and then the valley, and in that valley was a tiny speck of a hill with a building or buildings on it, and then came the white city over the roofs of which I could look into the valley, and immediately in front of me was the bronze equestrian statue of General Zaragoza. Surely Mrs. Piper was right. How could she be wrong in face of this evidence? Here was the scene just as she described it.

But that was all there was to it — a scene. She had caught the picture, but like the song in the "Mikado," it had "nothing to do with the case." It was simply the background and setting for Mr. Conner's dream — a real vision taken from the minds of Dr. Sparhawk and Mr. Dodge and set behind the dream vision of Mr. Conner. I did not know that the little hill in the valley was Pyramid La Grande, nor that the white speck on top of it was the great cathedral of Los Remedios. Nor were they conscious of it, but it was a remote and likely looking place, and as it was the only hill in the valley that had a building, or what looked at a distance like a group of buildings, it just naturally fitted the suspicion that it must be the place where Dean Bridgman Con-

ner was confined. And the little car that ran from the plaza to and past the pyramid was the "covered wagon." Here then were the picture and the suspicions all worked into a concrete semblance of something coherent and tangible, which fell to pieces, however, when submitted to the test of actual investigation. The only out about Mrs. Piper's description of the scene was the points of the compass; but then, such actualities are seldom tangible in a picture.

Every bit of the fabric which had been built on Mr. Conner's dream by Mrs. Piper and her "controls" went to pieces, crumbled as I proceeded with my investigation, and left absolutely nothing for me but a research into the actual life of Dean Bridgman Conner while he was in Mexico, and the following of him step by step to his work in the circus, his illness, his death and burial.

I talked with the people who had known him and worked with him, with those who had tended him in his illness, with the woman who had closed his eyes in death, with one of the men who had carried the body to the grave, and with the superintendent of the cemetery who saw that the grave was closed on the mortal remains of Dean Bridgman Conner.

Then I faced the professional men who had

examined the hair and teeth and broke down their testimony.

Surely that was enough. There was no missing link in the chain of evidence that I established to prove that Dean Bridgman Conner was dead and that he "slept" in the American cemetery in the City of Mexico. And I could find absolutely no shred of evidence to prove that he had been seen alive — in other than in a dream and by Mrs. Piper's spirit "controls" — after his corporeal death in the hospital.

The actual — the proved evidence in the case — contradicted Mr. Conner's dream and Mrs. Piper's "controls" at every point. The facts could not be made to fit the fanciful theory that had been built on Mr. Conner's dream. But every bit of the information given by Mrs. Piper can be traced to the actual knowledge of some one present at the "sittings" or to the suspicions based on this knowledge, or both jumbled together.

CHAPTER XXVIII

The question might very well be asked: What, if any, could be the purpose of kidnapping Dean Bridgman Conner? For surely if such a plot had been formed and carried out there must have been some purpose in it. It was suggested that he had valuable precious stones which were coveted. But who coveted them? In point of fact this young man had a few cheap opals and a ring with an opal setting. Opals were a drug on the Mexican market at that time. I bought a dozen or more of them from native lapidaries for five dollars. The ring, which he had purchased on the instalment plan, he evidently sold back to the original owner. He had no money with which to purchase valuable precious stones or jewelry of any kind.

All the money Dean Bridgman Conner had was the wages he earned during the ten weeks he worked in the circus, and this — Mr. Orrin assured me — he usually drew in advance. And, during his illness, Mr. Orrin advanced him money. The only bit of personal property the young man had that was worth anything was the gold watch which the Consul-General returned to his parents with his other effects.

So clearly nobody with any wit would want to kidnap him from the American hospital because of his worldly possessions. His worldly possessions were in his trunk which had been sent to the hospital and was in care of the matron. The Consul-General returned this trunk, with all it contained when it came to the hospital, to his parents in Burlington, Vt.

But the claim was made in the dream and by Mrs. Piper — or her "controls" — that Dean Bridgman Conner was being held for ransom. At first blush, and just because it was Mexico, that might seem plausible, and strangely enough it did seem plausible at the time. But nobody ever claimed this ransom. Nor is it known that anybody in Mexico after March 15, 1895, ever stated that Dean Bridgman Conner was alive and held for any such purpose. Certainly if anybody had kidnapped him for the purpose of obtaining ransom the person, or persons, would find it necessary to notify somebody before they could hope to secure the ransom.

But Mrs. Piper, or her "controls," gave the last, fine touch of romance and mystery to the case when they conjured up Dr. Cintz and his curious sanitarium. In its fantastic weirdness this seems like a Paranesi picture. I am very sure in my own mind that that concoction came unconsciously from the

dramatic imagination of Dr. Hodgson himself, and that it impinged itself on the mind of Mrs. Piper, and that it satisfied him when she wrote it out in her fragmentary way. For Mexico was a land of mystery, and strange people, and strange institutions — to Dr. Hodgson, and to Mr. Dodge, for that matter. And I accepted Dr. Cintz and his institution without question because I had confidence in Mrs. Piper.

However, such an institution as Dr. Cintz was supposed to conduct in Mexico could not possibly have existed without the knowledge of the authorities at that time. The Mexican government of Porfirio Diaz was altogether too vigilant to permit that sort of thing, especially in the vicinity of the city of Puebla — one of the finest and best-governed cities in Mexico. And it is perfectly ludicrous to think of Dean Bridgman Conner being kidnapped for the purpose of securing his personal service. Of what earthly use would he be either as a laborer or an artisan in a country where labor is so cheap?

It is easy enough to see the absurdity of these things now, but it should be remembered that this was a great mystery, and that it started with a dream, and that the critical faculties of those engaged in the case were completely submerged in the unbounded faith they had in Mrs. Piper. It was only after I

had thoroughly investigated the case and found myself critically studying every detail of Mrs. Piper's evidence that I saw the absurdity of these things.

But to understand the case clearly a few of the exact facts pertaining to Dean Bridgman Conner's illness in Mexico should be summarized briefly. When Mr. Orrin engaged Dean Bridgman Conner in New York to go to Mexico the young man complained of being ill. He went, however, but he did not feel well at any time while he was at work in the circus. I found that he did not take the best of care of himself while he was in Mexico. He was careless, for one thing, in regard to his eating, and a person on entering a foreign country should be extremely careful about eating. His vitality had been very materially sapped by a physical ailment which he had had before he went to Mexico, and when the fever came he did not have strength enough to resist its ravages. He had the worst form of typhoid fever and even the strongest succumb to this, with very few exceptions.

After typhoid fever a patient is almost helpless for about a month. He cannot walk when he first gets out of bed, and the period of convalescence, as a general thing, is nearer two months than one. The period of delirium, which usually lasts several days, comes when

the fever is at its height. If Dean Bridgman Conner had been carried to Puebla during this period, it is safe to say that he would not have lived to finish the journey.

So the whole kidnapping thing is preposterous, when looked at in a calm light, and the strange part of it is that a doctor like Richard Hodgson should have lent himself to the Mrs. Piper theory, or the dream theory, without first considering the typhoid fever and some of the other very essential matters in the case.

I confess that I gave little thought at the time to the young man's illness; but then I was not called upon to consider that phase of the question. My duty was to follow the instructions given by Mrs. Piper, and if possible bring back the young man. It was only when I found that following her instructions led to nothing that I gave these matters consideration. It was only after I proved to my own satisfaction that the young man really had died, that I began to see the folly of Mrs. Piper's "information."

Then I saw dimly what I afterwards saw more clearly, that the whole thing practically simmered down to what Mr. Boss had said it would that night we were in the train near Zacatecas — mind reading. I believed in Mrs. Piper when I started; I came back convinced that her information on the subject was wrong

information, even though it apparently came through the "controls" that have become so famous in the field of "spiritism." And if they were so palpably wrong in this case it would seem to be the part of prudence not to predicate too much on any of their statements. For they certainly were wrong in this case. They knew nothing except what somebody present at the "sittings" knew or suspected, or imagined — or possibly what Mr. Dodge knew or suspected at a distance. Yet I am not at all satisfied that, even at the "sittings" given while Mr. Dodge and Dr. Sparhawk were in Orizaba, it wasn't the mentality of Dr. Hodgson that was reflected in the information given, and not that of Mr. Dodge.

Every bit of information given by Mrs. Piper can be traced to mind reading — whether the information was correct or otherwise. And that is practically all that can be said about the case. The dream, Mrs. Piper and her "controls," and Dr. Hodgson were all wrong. Time and my own investigations have demonstrated that fact conclusively. The whole thing was a fabric of nonsense erected on a dream.

The greatest disappointment, however, came to Dr. Richard Hodgson, who really felt at the time that he had been selected by the spirit world to prove through this case, beyond the shadow of a doubt, the new religion of

spiritism. Of this he was to be the great Apostle and he was to have as aid in its establishment a new Aaron in the person of Mrs. Piper.

But after all what a bald, barren, unsatisfactory kind of an immortality was that which Dr. Hodgson hoped to give the world. The only thing about it worth a fig was the assurance of some kind of life after death — an assurance based on commonplaces and trivialities that bordered on the fantastic as well as the absurd, and which forced from Phillips Brooks the remark, after he had had a "sitting" with Mrs. Piper at one time:

"This may be the back door into heaven, but I want to go in by the front door."

But it certainly proves that Mrs. Piper is, or was, a mind reader when in the trance state, and therein lies whatever of value this case possesses to psychical research. It opens up, however, the entire question of the value of any information given by people in the trance state when there is somebody else present at the time.

About four years after my work in this case the *New York Herald* published an interview with Mrs. Piper in which she practically admits the claim which I have been making ever since I worked on the case of Dean Bridgman Conner. Among other things she made this statement over her own signature:

"I have never heard anything being said

by myself while in a trance state, which might not have been latent in (1) my own mind; (2) in the mind of the sitter; (3) in the mind of the person who was trying to get communications with some one in another state of existence, or some companion present with such person, or (4) in the mind of some absent person alive somewhere else in this world."

This is my contention in a nutshell. But Dr. Richard Hodgson told me that Mrs. Piper didn't know what she was talking about when she gave the *New York Herald* interview.

Well, if she didn't, who does?

In conclusion I want to give full credit to Mr. Boss. This case of Dean Bridgman Conner was really solved years before by him when the mining camp mediums drew a word picture of his father at the séances in Virginia City and Los Angeles. His practical mind saw clearly through the apparent mystery of those revelations. I might have eventually come to the same conclusion in regard to this case, but it was his clear statement of the case in which he was concerned, the night we were going on the train to Zacatecas, that gave me the clue which subsequently enabled me to fit all the evidence I secured into a complete chain and show conclusively that the case of Dean Bridgman Conner was nothing but — mind reading.

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