























# HARRY EDWARDS AND HIS HEALING

*By the same Author*

THE TRUMPET SHALL SOUND  
THEY SHALL BE COMFORTED  
PARISH THE HEALER  
ACROSS THE GULF  
ROGUES AND VAGABONDS  
THE CASE OF HELEN DUNCAN  
KEEP THE ROME FIRES BURNING  
POWER OF THE SPIRIT  
WHERE THERE IS A WILL





*A hitherto unpublished portrait of the youthful Harry Edwards*



*Another hitherto unpublished picture. Can you identify Edwards? He is standing, second on the left, with his Home Guard Colleagues.*

# HARRY EDWARDS AND HIS HEALING

*By*

MAURICE BARBANELL



SPIRITUALIST PRESS

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## CHAPTER I

### THE SEED IS SOWN

**I**T so happens that I wrote the first published account about spirit healing accomplished through Harry Edwards. That was sixteen years ago, when he was completely unknown and had just started the career which has reached meteoric heights. Indeed, he has achieved such eminence that many regard him as the world's greatest healer today.

Throughout all those years I have enjoyed his friendship and admired his steadfastness of purpose. Fame has not deflected him from what he regards as his main purpose, the task to which he has dedicated his life, the healing of the sick. Naturally, being human, he rejoices at the successes of his mission and the spread of his labours which now encircle the globe.

There is not to be found in him any trace of side or conceit, for he always recognises that he personally is not responsible for the dealing successes and that he is only the instrument of higher powers.

God has endowed him with the gift of healing, which he has developed. Indeed, in his early days, he was so unfamiliar with the names of some diseases that he had to consult a medical dictionary to understand the afflictions to which patients referred. The gift of healing cannot be acquired by attendance in a medical college.

Edwards is never inaccessible; he does not shield himself behind secretaries. Frequently I have telephoned him and have found that, busy man though he is, he has answered the telephone himself.

To all who meet him, he is a radiant, dynamic figure with a

welcoming smile and full of the serenity and confidence that are half the battle towards combating illness and disease.

His is not an easy life, for he seldom meets normally healthy people. He tells the story of a visit to a friend's house where he saw a group of children. "What is wrong?" he thought. Then he realised that it was one of those rare occasions where he was confronted with normally healthy children!

Naturally, all the sick persons who visit him think that their afflictions are very important (as they are to them) and often they insist on recitals of every detail of their illnesses. He listens to them without a trace of boredom because he is not bored. He possesses a natural sympathy for all who have a heavy burden to carry. This is doubtless due to the fact that his own life has been full of vicissitudes, because he has known trouble and difficulty and poverty.

Harry Edwards is never smug, or superior, or affected by any notions of pseudo-piety. He is completely normal, in so far as he enjoys good food, a good play, a good book, especially if it is a thriller, and a good holiday.

He has a passion for the country, and his house is always filled with flowers picked from the grounds. When he walks through them, he will stop to admire a beautiful floral specimen and draw your attention to its wondrous colour or its scent. He loves birds and is devoted to his budgerigars. There are two aviaries that fascinate you with their coloured plumage and their characteristic chatter. One of his hobbies is his tank of tropical fish, whose antics always seem to intrigue him.

Edwards dislikes wearing a tie and is happiest when he is able to work or move around in an open-neck sports shirt. He has one vice, if it may be so described, which is his love of smoking. The only times he does not seem to have a cigarette in his mouth are when he is asleep or demonstrating healing. The result is that he has a smoker's cough which, wonderful healer though he is, he does not, or cannot, cure.



Edwards is indifferent to money. I have been present when the massive post, which is now usually not less than ten thousand letters a week, has been opened, and noted that no preference was given to those in which patients enclosed donations. From the beginning, he has made it his rule never to charge for his services, relying entirely on voluntary donations for the support of himself and his mission.

For many years, he has demonstrated his gift of healing at large halls throughout the land. Frequently he was not even paid his expenses.

His successes in the field of healing are many, and it is these which are responsible for his fame. His files, which I have described as "the eighth wonder of the world," are crammed with letters from grateful patients who have been cured, often of incurable diseases. If there had been only one or two, these might be dismissed as a coincidence, but when the figures reach thousands that can no longer be advanced as a serious explanation.

Faith is not the explanation for his success. Many children, too young to have faith, have been healed. There are scores of remarkable successes with patients who did not know that friends or relatives had interceded on their behalf. These instances of "absent healing," where patient and healer never met, are multiplied by thousands of tributes from distant lands.

He cannot tell you why some are healed and others are not, nor can he explain the exact processes used in healing the sick through his agency. Spirit healing is not a cure-all; that there are failures is not surprising. What is astounding is the fact that there are so many successes, for, in the majority of cases, people come to him as a last resort. They have tried everything else and they regard spirit healing as their last hope.

I have been present at many of his healing demonstrations, both at his Sanctuary in Surrey and in halls throughout the country. I have frequently taken the chair for his meetings and given an

address to precede the demonstration. I have always marvelled at the dexterity with which the healing has been accomplished, and the remarkable fact that he never causes any pain, no matter how advanced the illness may be.

Always in performing his task of healing he stresses the important fact that he is not responsible for what occurs and that he is only the channel through which this power from a larger life comes. He never takes any credit for himself.

Edwards has gathered around him an enthusiastic band of helpers. The two who accompany him at all demonstrations and who collaborate in the work of his Sanctuary are Olive and George Burton. Burton was cured of a chest complaint by W. T. Parish, another great spirit healer, who has now passed on. The cure was accomplished by absent healing. It is by this means that Edwards performs most of his healing, for, obviously, he could not personally give treatment to thousands of people every week.

The Burtons saw Harry Edwards demonstrate at a public meeting at Croydon. This fired their enthusiasm and, when they went to live near him, they gave part-time help with his postbag. This has now grown into a full-time occupation for both of them. It is exacting work for all three, as it is for Eileen Nicholson, who also gives healing at the Sanctuary, and for Catherine Sheppard, who acts as his secretary. But they have the supreme satisfaction of seeing results, despair being removed and health given to bodies and minds which formerly were racked with pain.

The story of Edwards is that of a man who has been faithful to the light which he has seen and who is prepared to make any sacrifice to further his ministry, which still continues to spread. Not long ago, he demonstrated his gift to crowded gatherings in Holland and in Switzerland. London's Festival Hall has been crowded to witness one of his demonstrations. He has twice demonstrated at Belle Vue, Manchester which with its seating

capacity of seven thousand is probably the largest hall in this country.

Yet the healing mission began just sixteen years ago in a modest house in Balham, South-West London, in what he called the Fellowship of Spiritual Service. I have in front of me, as I write, the original letter written by one of his first patients, a woman whose husband was cured by absent healing. It was from this letter that I wrote my first account in *Psychic News*, which I was editing. It appeared under these headlines, "DID NOT KNOW OF HEALING: WIFE AMAZED WHEN HUSBAND WAS CURED." Here is the account:

"A patient, who did not know he was being treated, and yet was helped by absent healing, is one of the successful cases of Harry Edwards, the healing medium attached to the Fellowship of Spiritual Service, of Balham. The patient, an agnostic, has not yet been told of the reason for his remarkable recovery, which puzzled doctors who had advised hospital treatment.

"The man had had to give up work because of weakness, stomach trouble, dizziness and continued loss of weight. A specialist's examination revealed heart trouble and a suspected growth on the right lung. 'Your husband is a very sick man,' the doctor told the wife, 'and I should advise you to persuade him to go into the hospital and see if anything can be done for him. If not, have him home and make him as comfortable as possible.'

"Then the woman had an urge to go to a Spiritualist meeting, where she found, to her surprise, that the speaker was Harry Edwards, whom she knew but had not seen for a few years. The next week, she accidentally met Edwards in a shop and he arranged to put her husband, without his knowledge, on his absent healing list.

" 'During the night, he became so much better, that he got up quite early in the morning, announcing he felt remarkably well, and made an early cup of tea,' the wife reported later. 'Even during the night, when I complained of cramp, he arose

and filled a rubber bottle for me to relieve the pain. He looked a new man. The most surprising thing was his altered complexion, and the tired look had vanished from his eyes. I phoned my daughter, who came the next day to see him. She was astounded at the change in his appearance.'

"The loss of weight was arrested and, five weeks later, he had gained six pounds. When the man saw a doctor—not the one who treated him at first—he judged, from a comparison of the report on the case with the man's appearance, that he had been to hospital.

" 'I am convinced that the sudden wonderful change in my husband's condition was due to the help given to him through the prayers of my Spiritualist friends,' wrote the woman in a letter of thanks to the healer."

This account appears on the first page of two large scrapbooks—these form the basis for this book—in which are pasted all the Press cuttings dealing with Edwards's labours. By the side of my account is a modest report, occupying fourteen inches, the first to appear in a non-psychic newspaper, in the *Balham News and Mercury*. This newspaper's interest was aroused because Edwards was a local resident. It describes "four remarkable cures by spiritual healing" and its publication was the sequel to an interview with the healer.

In this interview Edwards stresses that no fees were charged for healing and that his work was voluntary. "We carry on the work solely for the love of it," he said. The account ended with these words, "Patients come to the centre from all parts of London."

Not even Edwards could have foreseen when he gave this interview that one day patients would be coming to him from all over the world, and that the post office would have to make special arrangements for the collection and delivery of his tremendous mail.

The scrapbooks of Edwards show that there was no further

Press mention of his healing activities for two months. The intervening pages are filled with detailed accounts of successes achieved, as revealed by the patients' original letters. It is obvious that in these early days he was surprised at the speedy results obtained—now it is regarded as a commonplace occurrence. Let us examine some of these early cures.

One of the first was a man suffering from recurring duodenal ulcers. The trouble became acute and was unfortunately quick in its development. The patient put himself on a special diet, which he thought might help his condition, but the weakness and the pain he suffered prevented him from attending his business for two days. Then Edwards was asked to give absent healing.

From the moment the healer began his intercession, the patient reported an improvement. Within a matter of days, he declared that he was completely free from pain and his general condition had improved.

He lived in the same locality as the healer, as did the next patient of whom there is a record. These were the circumstances. A woman called on Edwards and said that she had been advised by a medium to seek his aid for her sister who was dangerously ill with an internal complaint—the nature of the ailment is not mentioned.

Anyway, the woman's condition was considered very serious and her doctor was in daily attendance. In this connection, Edwards had two psychic experiences. During the absent healing, he had a vision of the patient's face and, when he met her the next day for the first time, he found that the image he had seen was correct. He was also impressed to write down the fact that, despite the doctors' concern, the woman would recover on the nineteenth of the month, five days later. This prediction was fulfilled. The patient made a rapid recovery and all traces of the illness disappeared within a week. Two doctors had been in attendance and both congratulated the patient on her amazing

recovery—they did not know that spirit healing was really responsible for it.

The next case concerns a woman whose mind had become unhinged and who was taken away from home to be placed under restraint. Here, absent healing was given and after a few months the doctors reported their amazement at her recovery. The report states, "She is now at home with her husband and children, attending dances and living a normal happy life."

There is a gap in the scrapbook, so far as publicity is concerned, until we come to November 1937, when I printed a letter from a woman who attended, for the first time, a Spiritualist church, at which Edwards was speaking and giving a healing demonstration. As she listened to the address, this woman, who had suffered with severe pains due to two locked arm bones since an accident two years previously, wondered if she could be helped.

No sooner had this thought crossed her mind than she had an extraordinary psychic experience. She saw the spirit body of the healer leave the platform while he was still speaking and move towards her. She said she felt as if she was overshadowed. Her own description is, "I felt frightened and perspiration came on my forehead."

On the way home, she could still sense the presence of this form with her. While she was telling herself not to be foolish, a great pain came to the joint, and she had to hold on to a railing. After a few seconds, the pain went and she felt she could move the joint. "I had not moved the joint for years," she writes, "but now I can use it to write this letter. I feel that a 'miracle' has happened."

Three months later, I received accounts of further healing successes achieved by Edwards, which I published. These were evidence that the power operating through him was gaining in strength. One jubilant writer was the sister of the woman who had been successfully treated for her internal complaint. Having witnessed the astonishing results with her sister, she asked for

healing for her foot, which had been malformed since birth. The bone was ossified, and a bone growth appeared between two toes, causing intense pain.

In spite of two operations, there had been consistent pain for some years, and the woman, whose employment necessitated her being on her feet all day, suffered considerably.

Three mornings after healing had been given, she found the bone growth had entirely disappeared, leaving the loose skin where the bone had been. Healing was continued. The ossification began to disappear, the bones separated, and the foot became pliable. Since the healing had been given, all trace of pain had gone.

A prominent eye specialist informed the parent of a lad that his sight was very weak and was failing. The sight of one eye would vanish in eighteen months, he said. Special powerful lenses were supplied—the boy could not see without using his glasses.

Absent healing was requested, the nature of the complaint not being given. After a few weeks, the boy could read newsprint with both eyes, without the use of glasses, and with no eye strain resulting.

A woman living in the west of England wrote asking for absent healing for an internal displacement of many years' standing which, according to medical report, could be corrected only by a surgical operation. Her employment caused her to lift heavy weights, which not only aggravated the complaint but caused intense pain.

Absent healing was given and, without the patient having to give up her employment, her affliction, with its attendant pain, vanished.

These cures attracted the attention of the same local newspaper which had previously referred to the work of Edwards. Indeed, the newspaper was proud of the fact that its previous account was exclusive. In newspaper parlance this meant that it had

scored over its rivals by the publication of exclusive news. After detailing these cures, the newspaper interviewed Edwards, who stated that he and his helpers had been inundated with letters with requests for healing. Again was stressed the keynote of his ministry, "We make no charge whatever."

Where people called, said the healer, personal treatment was given. He added that applications, which were coming from India and Australia, were dealt with by absent healing.

The news was spreading. Another South London periodical thought it worth while to tell its readers about these successes being achieved by a local medium. Here was the beginning of that flood of Press publicity which was to make Edwards a nationally known figure.

I have referred to these earlier cases to show the beginnings of this healing mission. It would become wearisome to report case after case in detail. I am outlining the growth of a ministry, showing how fidelity and sacrifice inevitably brought their reward.

The result of the early Press publicity was that Edwards began to receive invitations to address meetings, and a large number of these were brotherhood gatherings attached to religious organisations. After each meeting, Edwards attempted to get these religious groups to start their own healing services as part of the church's activities.

In these very early days, one rural dean wrote to express his appreciation of Edwards's services, and forwarded the names of six church workers for whom he wanted absent healing. The rural dean wrote: "We will all be co-operating with you. God's blessing and the thanks of all."

It is worth mentioning here that, some years later, when the Convocation of Canterbury asked the Church of England to set up a committee to inquire into spiritual healing, an action which I am sure was largely due to the work that Edwards had done, the Primate was at some pains to make it clear that the Church



regarded Edwards as outside its fold. When a public meeting was held in Canterbury, the Primate declined an invitation to send, or even to permit, his representatives to be present. This, however, is an anticipation.

All was not smooth sailing in the early days. At one religious meeting held in Kennington, South-East London, after he had addressed them, two speakers stressed that they did not regard the ministrations performed by Edwards as being in any way connected with what they called divine healing. This was in line with the many attempts made throughout the ages by those whose short-sighted religious views made them believe that their own sects possessed some monopoly of divine power, and that any other attempts to serve humanity made by people outside their fold could not possibly have divine approval.

Edwards, however, was not daunted. He was even a frequent speaker at Hyde Park where, despite hecklers and incredulous sceptics, he strove to draw attention to the facts of spirit healing.

## CHAPTER II

### THE FIRST SHOTS

THE growing interest in spirit healing, due to the cures achieved by Edwards and his colleagues, continued to arouse local attention. The Balham newspaper, three months later, published Edwards's answers to questions which he had asked. Obviously, the editor was intrigued by what was happening, though he still struck a cautious note. He referred to the "remarkable spirit healing cures claimed by Mr. Harry Edwards, the well-known healer."

In an introduction to these questions and answers, an editorial note stated that Edwards had been inundated with requests for treatment and that, mainly, readers wanted to know how the healing was performed because they were "amazed at the results." Here are the questions and answers as they were published:

*"Can you explain simply how spiritual healings are effected?"*

"I will try. It is now definitely established, from the cumulative mass of evidence here and elsewhere, that these healings take place, and are, therefore, facts. We know that no occurrence or change over happens without some force or law being responsible for the events. Nothing ever happens just by chance. So that when the facts of healing are considered, it is obvious that definite forces, working under psychic laws, are operated, and it is these forces that use the healer, and which the healer is able to induce."

*"Is there any fundamental difference between the laws accepted by science and the healing laws?"*

"Yes. The laws that govern matter and its changes, climate,

electrical apparatus, and indeed, all physical laws, are automatic in operation, acting without any mind control. Healing laws, through their diverse nature, treating complaints from, say, the removal of a malignant growth to the restoration of sight or an unbalanced mind, must of necessity be directed by an intelligence. This premise is further strengthened by the fact that as they are invoked by thought so must they be received and operated by thought."

*"How do you use these forces? Is it by thought alone?"*

"It is more than that. There is first the conditioning, or tuning-in, of the healer to act as an emission agent, as well as a receptive channel for the healing to be received, so that it may thence be passed on to the patient."

*"How does this apply when there are people who heal successfully and yet do not go in for a process of 'conditioning'?"*

"They do prepare or condition themselves, although they may be unconscious of the act of so doing. I have yet to hear of a healer who does not invoke aid by a thought appeal, such as prayer, and it probably is that he or she has unconsciously become a receptive medium."

*"How do healers 'condition' themselves?"*

"As a rule this takes a period of time, which varies according to the latent psychic faculties of the person. In my own case I spent an average of three evenings a week for two years, and am still doing so, in the endeavour to become sensitive to the psychic forces. With others a shorter—but generally it is a longer—time is found necessary."

*"You speak of psychic laws and healing laws. What is the difference?"*

"The term 'psychic law' is a general term that covers the varying qualities of the psychic forces of which healing power is but one. Then, again, this quality is sub-divided, for a different quality would be necessary to heal a physical complaint from that required for remedying an unbalanced mind."

*"The intelligences that direct the healing, what are they?"*

"I believe that the fount of this power is the Godhead, and that the intelligences that co-operate are discarnate entities, serving the power of good to use the powers, known to them, through human instruments for human good."

*"You mean they are people who once lived on earth?"*

"Precisely. There is abundant evidence in particular cases to prove their identity."

*"How does spiritual healing differ from faith healing?"*

"Faith, confidence and will-power do play important parts in some recoveries. Spiritual healing is much more than this, though I note you described our work on your contents bill last week as 'Faith Healing.' Some of the most amazing healings have been accomplished without the patient having any knowledge that healing has been given. I have in mind a Balham man, a professed agnostic, who, because of a delicate heart condition, could not be told of his complaint of a malignant growth on the lung. The growth was taken from him overnight, his heart strengthened, and he is alive today. A child does not possess this faith, nor can a person whose mind is deranged; yet they are helped and cured."

*"How does the healing power pass to the patient?"*

"The simplest way I can answer this is that the healer acts as a wireless receiver, receiving the healing power through the instrumentality of his mediumship, and which is then passed on to the patient. Healers sometimes are conscious of a change of personality, condition, or quality of power, or of a change in the method of healing, with differing complaints."

*"How does absent healing work?"*

"We are only on the threshold of our knowledge of these divine powers, and it is difficult to give categorical answers; but may I say that just as we, with our limited knowledge, are able to find a stated person in another country, and speak to him through the various methods of communication, so are these progressed

intelligences able to answer an appeal for help for a stated person."

*"Can you promise a healing cure?"*

"No, we can only try. With some a rapid cure may take place, or a lengthy treatment may be necessary. I can only say that invariably the patient receives some benefit."

*"Do you know of any reason why there is uncertainty?"*

"It is, I suggest, common sense, that the spirit healers have to work in conjunction with our physical laws, blending the metaphysical and physical. Where that can be accomplished, and the patient able to receive the power given, then a healing will take place."

*"I have heard of healing through the astral body. Do you agree?"*

"Yes, but I prefer to leave this question at this stage, as it leads to more involved questions, which I shall be happy to deal with another time."

*"Well, one last question. Do you agree with doctors?"*

"Most assuredly. I often advise patients to consult medical opinion. I am sure that we must use our knowledge of the health laws and profit by our human knowledge. Many of the medical profession are now interested and sometimes co-operate with healers. When the time arrives for a true combination of the physical healing knowledge with spirit help, then much more progress will be made."

Even this fairly lengthy account did not end the matter for, in the same issue, the newspaper published an editorial on the subject under the heading, "Modern Miracle, in which it stated:

"In our day the word 'miracle' has almost become meaningless. We do not mean to suggest that the age of miracles has passed, but rather that we have seen the revelation of so many of Nature's marvellous secrets that we scarcely have surprise left for any more. A hundred years ago, it would have been regarded as a miracle to hear from a small box in our homes the voice of a

statesman speaking many miles—and even Continents—away. That is only one instance.

“Thus, we withhold scepticism when we look at the claims of spiritual healing in Balham and Tooting today. To one well-known healer we put sixteen direct and pertinent questions, and the answers must be regarded as quite fair. The whole matter involves points which are decidedly points of mystery—some may be regarded as of doubtful validity—but that there are yet more powers in the universe to be discovered no one can deny. Our word of warning would be this, that the science (if it be permissible to describe it as such) must be pursued with care; too much must not be expected of it.”

The following week, the newspaper returned to the subject:

“In order to explain as exactly as possible the nature of the treatment afforded, we put to Mr. Edwards sixteen specific questions and gave his answers. This week’s questions certainly carry the matter into deeper channels.

“One correspondent declares that the answers Mr. Edwards gave to our queries are the most reasonable he has read. He asks for more particulars as to the healing power—is it electric, magnetic, or what? Do healers need different powers for different diseases? Why are there so few healers? Why do so many have Red Indian guides? Why is a cure effected in some cases in a few seconds, while another may take months?

“Another reader writes to say her daughter was helped by spirit healing after having been discharged from hospital. ‘It has always puzzled me,’ she adds, ‘how Mr. Edwards can tell the illness through his hands.’ She would like to know, because her friends are interested.

“A Du Cane Court resident, who has benefited from spirit healing more than from a doctor in six years, asks what proof there is for the existence of the astral body, and how healing can affect the material body through the astral body. Why is it, he

also asks, that when similar healing is given to two people with similar complaints one is cured and the other is not? He adds that these questions are put, not through perversity, but because of a genuine interest in the matter.

“‘Why do not clergymen do this work?’ is the point put by another Balham reader. Does Mr. Edwards think he has divine power?

“One more correspondent, who remarks that it is not often the Press keeps in touch with the modern trend of opinion, inquires whether there is any method by which one is conscious of the feeling of possessing healing power. Many people, he feels, have these valuable gifts, and it is a pity there are so few accredited healers.

“Is it not true (he adds) that with the extension of this knowledge, it will be borne, if not forced, on to the mind of mankind, that there must be other than human minds existing, which, when realised, will cause man to change much of his way and life and so end this gross materialistic age with its lunacy of strife and war?

“An Earlsfield reader wonders whether doctors who have passed over are now helping from the spirit side of life.

“But there are a few who are antagonistic. ‘I do not mind you printing about healing,’ is one observation in a letter, ‘but does your man know he is dealing with the affairs of the devil? Do any of our clergymen who belong to Holy Church do this work? My priest tells me it is the devil’s work, and no one should interfere with spirits. because all good people wait for the Resurrection.’ ”

The account closes with these words:

“When we communicated with Mr. Edwards telling him of these letters, he stated he also has received a large number, and he has promised to reply to the main points next week.”

At about this time, one local newspaper published what it called “SPIRIT CURES—A TABLE OF RESULTS” analysing the results

obtained during the past year. This table revealed some interesting figures, which the newspaper reproduced:

"Of the tubercular cases, twenty-five per cent claim to be cured, thirty per cent reported improvement, fifteen per cent no improvement, and ten per cent succumbed. No information is available regarding twenty per cent of the cases.

"Exactly half of the cases of growths are claimed to be completely cured; no information is given in thirty per cent, but not a single case failed to show improvement. Satisfactory cures were effected in twenty per cent of the mental and nerve complaints, forty per cent of bone maladies, deafness twelve per cent, eye complaints ten per cent, and general complaints thirty-four per cent. Although no case in the rheumatism and arthritis group was completely cured, improvement was reported in fifty-one per cent."

The newspaper added: "Commenting on the statistics, Mr. Edwards says: 'It is noteworthy that with treatment for growths there is no partial cure. The growth is either removed or not. Regarding the rheumatism group, only severe cases come within review of these figures (slight attacks being inevitably removed) and here it is seen that in no case has a severe affliction been totally removed.

" 'A good proportion of cases comes to us as a last resort, when all other human skill has failed. In some cases the body is so weak that recovery could not be normally expected. It is indeed an achievement to arrest the progress of a complaint and lessen pain. In these circumstances a very much lower percentage of improvements and cures would be satisfactory.

" 'People who write for or receive healing must not expect an immediate cure in every case. They are more the exception than the rule. Amazing cures do take place, but they cannot be promised, nor should they be expected, as healings depend on many factors.

" 'The latest case of interest from our record book is that of a



woman suffering from a malignant growth and not expected to live more than a few weeks. Drugs were administered and a healer was asked to visit her and ease the intense pain. Within a week of the first visit, the pain decreased so much that the drugs were dispensed with and the patient able to sit up. Eight weeks have now passed and the patient, though not yet cured, is able to go out in a chair. In this, as in similar cases, the recovery is beyond explanation by the doctor in charge.' "

Now we come to Edwards's published replies to the last batch of questions. He dealt pungently with the correspondent who asserted that spirit healing was the work of the devil.

"My mind takes me back two thousand years ago," he replied, "when the greatest healer of all time was on the earth. I refer to Jesus. Would he (the writer) dare say that our Lord's healing was the work of the devil? The mighty power of Christ is still on the earth, working through his instruments.

"Our friend has asked the question, 'Would any of our clergymen who belong to the holy church do this work?'

"May I suggest that they could do if they made themselves fitting instruments and were willing to work under the same conditions as Jesus did, as unpaid servants?"

The newspaper apparently regarded Edwards as a one-man brains trust, for it continued:

"In order to ascertain further particulars we put to Mr. Edwards a number of questions and these were supplemented by some from our readers. We give a selection:

*"Do I think I have divine power?"*

"Of course not. I would, however, remind the questioner that the fount of the healing force is divine, and people both in the spirit world and this are but channels or mediums for the transmission of that power."

*"Do doctors help, from spirit life, in this work?"*

"Yes, many are known, of all nationalities, and whose identities have been proved. Similarly, scientists, musicians and others

continue to work through human sensitives in the work they were, and still are, interested in. Remember the instance last year of the 'lost' Schumann concerto."

*"Why do not clergymen do this work?"*

"Why not, indeed? If the Church freed itself from stupid prejudice and carried on this truly spiritual and divine work, there would be no question of declining congregations. An increasing number of the clergy are now conducting prayer healing circles, and that is the first step to their greater understanding of the work of the spirit healers."

*"Do I know I am dealing with the devil? Does any priest of the holy Church do this work? My priest tells me it is the devil's work."*

"The only merit of these questions is to illustrate to the *bona-fide* inquirers the prejudice healers have to encounter. If helping tortured bodies and minds is devil's work, he cannot be such a bad fellow after all. The questioner also says that only 'the good people must await the resurrection morning.' Presumably all those who are not good, according to the mental outlook of the questioner and the priest, become evil spirits. Which is more devilish, to preach this absurdity or to heal the sick?"

*"Will not the extension of the knowledge of spirit existence and co-operation bring about a new ethical conception of life, leading mankind to end much of the lunacy of our present existence?"*

"This question pleases me most. For this is the actual work of the Spiritualist, whether healer or other worker. We regard psychic phenomena as of the least importance compared with the ultimate purpose of spirit endeavour. Here we have a series of truths, capable of demonstration, of continued life, possessing memory, character, ambition, individuality, after the physical existence.

"The movement is spreading rapidly, and is now respected and accepted. Young men and women are developing their psychic gifts. Within a stone's throw of Balham station I know of at least

a dozen spiritual healers, working voluntarily every week, of as many classes for the development of psychic gifts with probably an attendance of nearly a hundred people training to be mediums, and the local churches are crowded.

"All this is built up on the demonstration of the truth of survival. The important aspect is that as man realises the tremendous importance of the manner he conducts his earth life so will his greater spirit life reflect his character. Man must cease to strive after that which causes the chaos of our mode of life and build up a new morality, greater than treaties and armaments."

Here are further questions submitted to Edwards and his answers:

*"What is healing power, is it electric, magnetic, or what?"*

"It is a force possessing the highest known vibratory radiation. Just as we have to accept the electric, magnetic, centrifugal forces of heat, gravity, cohesion, etc., so we have to accept the power of healing as a force."

*"Do healers need different forces for different diseases?"*

"The same force is used, but a differing quality. This is outside the province of the healer to direct. The correct radiation of the healing force is transmitted by the spirit intelligence according to the need. It may well be that different spirit transmitters are necessary to transmit the differing qualities according to the complaint."

*"Diagnosis, how is this accomplished?"*

"Healers diagnose in different ways. There is no set method. Some diagnose direct from spirit intelligence in a state of trance, others possess an 'X-ray' eye, while some sense on their own person the complaints. In my case, as I pass my hands over the body, there is an attraction to the affected part. Here again I cannot give a concrete explanation. I can only say it is the method adopted by the spirit healers who use me."

*"What proof is there that we possess an astral body?"*

"Much could be written in answer to this question, but I am

afraid the editor's patience would become exhausted. In brief, if the questioner considers how a medium can hear what is inaudible to the normal ear, see what is invisible to the normal sight, and how the healer is able to pass healing to remove affliction that is beyond the comprehension of medical science, he may realise that these psychic realities must be received by other than the accepted faculties. As like is received by like, it should be clear that these communications from spirit intelligences must be received by the spirit counterpart of our physical body.

"I have no doubt that for some diseases, especially mental ones, the healing is effected through the astral or spirit body of the patient. As all people possess a spirit body, it is interesting to realise that it functions with us now."

The interest did not abate, for nearly six months later the same Balham newspaper returned to the subject in an account that was headed: "MORE CURES CLAIMED BY SPIRITUAL HEALER: MR. EDWARDS REPORTS BIG INCREASE IN DEMAND FOR HIS SERVICES: SOME REMARKABLE RESULTS."

"Six months ago we published an account of some remarkable cures claimed by Mr. Harry Edwards, the well-known spiritual healer, and his band of workers at the Fellowship of Spiritual Service, Childebert Road, Balham.

"Since that time the requests for treatment have been so numerous that the Sanctuary has been crowded with sufferers, and an afternoon session was arranged to deal with the demand.

"Requests for absent treatment also increased, and, allowing for those who write saying they are cured, the number averages a hundred a week. According to the large batch of letters which Mr. Edwards receives daily from all parts of the country, many sufferers have been completely cured, and in every case treated some benefit at least has resulted.

"There appears to be no restriction as to the character of cases dealt with. They include various forms of nervous diseases,

mental disorders, bone malformations, anæmia, neurasthenia, rheumatism, lung trouble, malignant growths and ulcers.

"The most amazing feature of spiritual healing seems to be the power of diagnosis. According to Mr. Edwards, it is very rare that the complaint is not ascertained by the healers without previous knowledge or questioning. Mr. Edwards claims that by the passing of his hands outside the clothing he is able to state not only the nature of the complaint, but the seat of the trouble.

"Another of the healer's activities is the visiting of patients too ill to attend the Sanctuary. Many of these cases are of supposed incurable maladies. No promise of a cure is ever given, and there are cases where cures are not effected, yet it is invariably found that pain is eased and a more peaceful condition ensues.

"Work at the Sanctuary is voluntary, no charges or fees are made, and help is refused to no one.

"Here are some cases selected at random from Mr. Edwards's records. The names and addresses in each case are withheld, but were handed to a reporter for his own verification.

"A young woman recovering from a serious abdominal complaint received healing for tuberculosis. A lung was collapsed, and doctors told the patient that three years' treatment would be necessary. The patient had monthly refills of the lung, and received healing on three occasions. The healer told her, no more refills would be necessary, a fact which was proved the next time she went to the hospital. A specialist examined her, and later wrote the following report: 'You will be glad to know I was entirely satisfied with your film. There is no sign whatever now of a cavity, and I think you have done remarkably well.'

"More remarkable still is the fact that within a short time of receiving healing the young lady was accepted as a nurse at the sanatorium where she was formerly a patient!

"A mother brought her daughter for healing, saying that as a result of a fall a hard lump the size of an egg had formed on her daughter's arm. The healer put his fingers on the lump, which

disappeared completely within a few seconds, and has not returned.

"A young woman, whose mother showed every sign of an internal malignant growth, asked that absent healing should be given. Within one day, says the report, there was a great improvement. A week later the daughter wrote: 'Every trace of the symptoms has disappeared—my mother is much better in health.'

"Physical ailments are not the only cases dealt with. A boy suffered from an inferiority complex and stammering. He was given absent treatment, the mother reporting a marked general improvement.

"One of the most interesting cases was that of a man obliged to give up his occupation owing to deafness. After a few weeks' absent healing he recently wrote of a complete recovery, and that he had now resumed work.

"Mr. Edwards is particularly interested in dealing with children's cases. As a rule, he says, they are very receptive to the healing power."

The spreading interest in the healing ministry can be gauged by the fact that Edwards thought it necessary to publish a leaflet for patients who were seeking his services. It was headed "Points to Remember" and contained the following observations:

"Spirit healings are obtained through the overcoming of the effects of the physical laws by direction of the spirit healing forces by the spirit healing guides.

"Discomfort is removed when the *cause* is healed, and at times it takes a little time for the spirit forces to obtain superiority. Progress is best measured over the whole period and not from day to day.

"Easement is seen as the healing develops leading to full recovery.

"Some people consider the spirit healers should not be bothered with minor complaints. This is incorrect. Minor com-

plaints can not only be quickly reduced but the body resistance increased against further attacks. This specially applies to the common cold. *There would not be the many serious conditions if they were removed in the early stages and the body fortified and strengthened thereby.*

"Never delay your report in order to report progress. Negative reports are just as valuable for *directive healing* as good ones. The regular weekly reports are vital to ensure the continual flow of healing power. Reports should be complete yet brief.

"When you are told the healing symptoms that will take place, please look for them and report. Remember the *cause* of the discomfort has to be removed for a healing to take place. Balance has to be restored and the progress will first be seen where the healer tells you. *Healings are often progressive, stage by stage.*

"You can render service by telling any sick friend of this healing power so that they too may be helped. We will gladly help all who apply for healing.

"It is our aim to establish, endow and equip a modern healing centre to help all who are sick (without any obligation for fees) and donations are invited to further this service of healing.

"No donations are desired from those who cannot afford to send them, for all are equal in the sight of the healer and the spirit healing guides.

"Considerable expenses are entailed in carrying on this service; therefore it is felt that those who can afford to send free will donations (large or small) should do so as generously as they can, with their weekly reports.

"The healing gifts of the Spirit are beyond 'price'."

Edwards could not be kept out of the news, for soon the *South London Press* reported on its front page an account which was headlined: "WOMAN SAYS 'SPIRIT' TOLD HER TO BUILD NEW CHURCH—SHE AGREED WHEN HER KNEE TROUBLE HAD BEEN CURED."

The woman was Mrs. Florence Wright and this is the story the newspaper had to relate:

“ ‘Spirit messages,’ which she claims to have come from a Red Indian ‘guide,’ have prompted Mrs. Florence Wright, of Gassiot Road, Tooting, to buy and convert a former factory in Longmead Road, Tooting, into a Spiritualist church.

“Named after Mrs. Wright’s seventeen-year-old daughter Ella, who died nine years ago, the first service at the Ella Wright Spiritualist Church was held on Sunday.

“Mrs. Wright’s decision to establish a Spiritualist church in Tooting follows her claim that she was cured of a knee ailment by Mr. Harry Edwards, the Spiritualist healer, after hospital treatment had failed.

“ ‘I was in hospital for several months,’ Mrs. Wright said, ‘and was treated by manipulative surgery and underwent operations. I had been receiving messages from my Red Indian guide for about fifteen years, asking me to take up Spiritualistic work, but I had always refused. I always replied when he appeared before me, “You heal my body first.”’

“ ‘When I left hospital, I was treated by a doctor and was given medicine to help me to sleep, but I disliked taking it. My guide appeared before me once again and told me to go to Childebert Road. I went there and after manipulative treatment by Mr. Edwards my knee troubles completely disappeared.

“ ‘For the first time in many years I was able to run upstairs and live a housewife’s normal busy life. Now I can look after my husband and two daughters properly.’ ”



## CHAPTER III

### A DOCTOR'S TESTIMONY

THE scene changes to wartime, when Edwards was a member of the Home Guard. Even here there is evidence of the fact that he could not resist healing. Edwards himself told one story in *Psychic News*:

"I was recently engaged with others on night duty at a London A.A. battery, when I overheard a conversation between a sergeant and some of his pals. He said he had suffered from eye trouble for some years and had been undergoing an expensive treatment from which he could not benefit for a long time. To complicate matters, a nasty ulcer was affecting the eye.

"This conversation took place during one of the recent London air raids. The situation at the battery was, to say the least, rather tense. I felt impelled to 'concentrate' on that eye.

"I saw this sergeant again, the other night, and asked how his eye was progressing. I did this with some confidence, as the eye looked normal.

"He replied: 'It is funny you should ask me. My eye is now quite better.' He told me he had been going to a specialist for some time past for weekly treatment.

"He then added: 'The remarkable thing is that during the last two weeks I have been unable to go for this treatment. Yet in its absence, the eye has recovered.'

"I then asked if he could remember the night on the A.A. battery, and whether he noticed that the change for the better began then. He replied: 'I remember quite well, for that was the night when I had the ulcer badly. Instead of getting worse, as it ought to have done, it cleared itself away overnight.'

"The sergeant asked why I was interested. I told him that, unknowingly on his part, he had received spirit healing. I explained it, as far as I could, expecting to be received with ridicule. This sergeant expressed his gratitude, said he had heard of such work, and was sympathetic. He has now asked for further service for his family."

This was followed, four months later, by an account in the same newspaper of the problem that Edwards had created for a Roman Catholic who lived in the south of England. Her mother had recently passed on from cancer. Says the newspaper report:

"Her suffering during the last few days was eased to such an extent that she dispensed with drugs, was able to sleep peacefully and to eat.

"The woman's problem arises because her mother's eased condition coincided with the time she applied for absent spiritual healing. She cannot decide whether the medium, or the priest who had prayed, was responsible.

"The daughter—who describes herself as 'a fairly level-headed woman of forty-two'—wrote to Harry Edwards, of whose psychic healing she had read. Her sixty-seven-year-old mother was suffering from an advanced cancer. The pain was so acute she was taking morphia.

"'We all feel the end has come,' she wrote, 'but I have read of miracles happening, and so I wrote to you.'

"The day after she posted the letter, this woman noticed a great improvement in her mother's condition. She had her first peaceful sleep for weeks and awoke next morning apparently refreshed. She had a light meal and retained it, an unusual thing for her. From that time, she had no pain and took no further drugs. She passed on a few days later.

"Two days before she died, the sick woman seemed to be talking to her dead mother, and the family could not understand it. It was entirely natural and the dying woman spoke normally at the same time to other people in the room.

" 'It seemed as if her mother was with us in the same room,' wrote the daughter. 'The priest has been calling frequently and praying for her peace. He and my family think that the change and the other matter were the results of prayer. I cannot forget that the change commenced on the evening you said you would work for my mother.

" 'This is a problem I must work out for myself, whether the wonderful peace came through the priest or through yourself. I cannot express in words my heartfelt deepest thanks to you for your help, for I cannot free my mind, hard as it is to a Catholic, that the wonderful thing happened through your ministration, that my mother had such peace for her last hours.' "

Incidentally, this was one of six cases cited by Edwards to demonstrate that often a change occurs in the condition of the patient almost at the hour when absent healing is administered.

"The different natures of the complaints preclude the suggestion that only one kind of disease can be treated in such a way," he wrote.

"The fact that four of the six patients did not even know healing was being given rules out the possibility that improvement was the result of auto-suggestion."

Then, not long afterwards, there was another account telling how a growth had disappeared under the healer's hands:

"A woman asked for help for a growth in the breast that to the touch appeared as a hard solid lump about four inches in length. After healing was administered, the growth diminished to the size of a nut and all pain disappeared.

"Another patient had suffered for two years from an abdominal ulcer, bringing with it very acute pains. She had been under hospital treatment for a long time and on a strict diet.

"After healing had been given, Edwards asked her to find the pain. She felt and pressed, and was amazed that no pain remained. Since this one treatment, she has had no return of the trouble and has been having normal food.

"A patient, discharged from a sanatorium as incurable with tubercular disease in the lung, had a few weeks' treatment. Then an examination was made of the chest by the same medical authority, who said that 'there does not appear any trouble here now.'

"An elderly man, suffering from paralysis, so that his hands were powerless, eye trouble and head pains, after the first treatment was able to use his hands and clasp objects with strength. He also received relief for both the eye and head pains.

"Suffering from very bad varicose veins and, according to the doctor, phlebitis as well, a woman received three treatments from Edwards. The veins decreased considerably, so that the doctor asked what treatment she had had to make so marked an improvement, and all trace of the phlebitis had disappeared.

"Before treatment, she was unable to go to business, but after the first healing she was able to resume work and has since been to dances."

For some time, accounts of his activities, because it was wartime, with its consequent restrictions, were appearing only in the psychic press. Here is a story of success in the medium's family:

"Harry Edwards has noticed that often when he is asked to give absent treatment the improvement has started almost at the hour when he has concentrated on the patient.

"Sometimes people have spoken to him casually of their ailments. He has sent out, for a second or two, the 'desire for healing.' Often he has found later that minor complaints have been cured from that moment.

"A few days ago, Edwards's son was sent to hospital after a wire had lacerated the eyeball. At the hospital, the doctor said the laceration—it was sufficiently severe to make the uninjured eye bloodshot—was dangerous. He arranged an appointment with an eye specialist for the following morning. When the specialist came to examine the injury, the bandage was taken off—and there was no trace of the injury."

This was evidence of the efficacy of absent healing, as was also the next case:

"When Edwards was asked to help a young woman suffering from tuberculosis, it seemed that improvement started on the day the absent healing was begun. A letter from a friend, a short time later read:

" 'As I told you, she was very ill. The doctor could give no hope, saying he had done all he could for her. Well, there has been a wonderful improvement, her breathing becoming less difficult and her temperature more normal.

" 'Her sister called on me yesterday after coming from the sanatorium and says she is still improving. The doctor is pleased and says there is hope now. She noticed the improvement a fortnight ago. . . . I have no hesitation in believing the healing started from the date you mentioned.' "

Naturally, the constant reporting of healing successes, even though the publicity was largely confined to psychic journals, began to attract wider attention. A good healer has no need to advertise—his cures are his best advertisement. A patient who finds that spirit healing has freed him from afflictions of many years' standing, especially after medical treatment produced no benefit, naturally tells his friends. Among them there are "incurables" who, having heard with despair the dread verdict that nothing more can be done for them, clutch at the new hope.

I have already described the interest of the clergy in spirit healing, a subject which once belonged to their domain. This is due to the fact that originally priests had the gift of healing. They were not able to heal because they were priests. They were able to heal only because they possessed the gift of healing. Its exercise became part of their priestly ministrations.

In this chronicle we have now reached the stage where the spirit healing began to attract the attention of the medical profession. Quite unexpectedly, I received a tribute to the efficacy of the absent healing performed by Edwards from a doctor

I have known for many years and who was familiar with mediumship. This doctor sent me for publication a record of four cases of "incurable" diseases cured by Edwards. The doctor had sought the healer's aid after reading the many accounts I had published. Medical etiquette forbids me to publish the doctor's name, but here are the four cases that were described:

"Case 1. Three years ago, the patient contracted a skin disease known as *Sycosis Barbae*, an intractable and very distressing complaint. For reasons connected with the war, it was the better part of a year before he could obtain expert treatment, and the specialists then informed him that, owing to the delay, the prospects of a cure were remote. I mentioned the case to a colleague, who replied, 'Having had no treatment for nine months, he will be fortunate if he is cured in nine years.'

"For nearly two years he attended the skin departments of various hospitals in London and in the Provinces, and though a temporary improvement was occasionally observed, the sores on his face did not heal and the area they covered slowly increased.

"Last April Edwards was asked to treat the case, and when I saw the patient about a fortnight ago, his face had entirely healed, nothing remaining but the pale scars showing where the sores had been. As in the other cases that I have seen treated by Edwards, the cure was gradual, only a slight improvement being observed during the first few weeks. Then suddenly the healing process accelerated until the sores disappeared.

"Case 2. This was a woman complaining of progressive loss of weight, intolerable fatigue and a steady deterioration in health, for which her doctor could find no adequate cause. He attributed it to anxieties and malnutrition connected with the war and prescribed the usual remedies. Things, however, went from bad to worse, until she could scarcely walk and found it difficult to force herself to eat.

"In the late autumn, Edwards was approached and commenced treatment. For some weeks there was no particular improve-

ment, but suddenly, on the morning of Christmas Day, the patient felt better, and to her friends' surprise ate a large dinner of turkey and plum pudding. From that day she improved steadily and today is in excellent health, and has regained the two stones in weight lost during her illness.

"I do not know what caused the trouble, but it can have had nothing to do with war conditions since these were unchanged during the period of cure.

"Case 3. This patient suffered from an intractable varicose ulcer on the skin, complicated by varicose veins of long standing. As it did not respond to treatment, Edwards's help was invoked, without any great hope of success on account of the time the trouble had been in existence. For some months nothing much happened. It did not spread, but it showed little sign of healing, probably because the patient was unable to rest the limb.

"Then, suddenly, about a fortnight ago, it began to heal rapidly; the swelling subsided, and today the sore is less than half its original size, and if progress is maintained at the same rate, it should be entirely healed within the next fortnight. Varicose ulcers, as all doctors know, seldom heal unless rest in bed can be obtained.

"Case 4. This is another case of long-standing varicose veins. Both legs were much swollen, and the least abrasion threatened an indolent ulcer similar to that of Case 3. The patient is a very busy woman, and in wartime is scarcely ever off her feet.

"In spite of this, the swelling has subsided since Edwards started treating her, and she says she feels ten years younger.

"It will be noted that all these cases were most unpromising from the medical point of view. Not one of them has ever met Edwards, who gave them what is known as absent treatment. I have no notion how the treatment works; all I can say is that the conditions were as stated."

Not long after the publication of this account, I was able to record in *Psychic News* that Edwards was treating two hundred

patients a week. His healing had started a snowball of evergrowing dimensions, and was causing so much comment that I invited him to write an article on the effect of spirit healing, as he had witnessed it. On reading it again after these years, I am struck with the conciseness with which he dealt with my request. Here is his account:

"To healers and Spiritualists, spirit healing is the least understood of all phenomena, and little constructive effort has been made to provide an operative thesis. Further, within the realm of spirit healing that of absent healing is still less understood.

"This may be due to the fact that healers serve as individuals. They are unorganised, and no attempt has been made to collate records and find comparative evidence, or even generalisations.

"As every spirit healing is the result of law-governed forces intelligently applied by spirit minds, there must be a great deal of common ground upon which postulates can be formed.

"To make a contribution to this end, I set out symptoms of healing within my experience and classified according to the nature of the disease. These symptoms have been noted through spirit healing over ten years, and in many cases they are common to both 'personal' and 'absent healing' treatments. It is significant that in both classes of healing the symptoms of improvement are the same.

"With growths, healing is generally rapid, sometimes a matter of hours. If the cancer is in the digestive canal there is an unusual discharge within a few hours of the first healing treatment. When this happens, a recovery invariably follows. The implication is that the growth is removed this way and contains a cancerous content.

"If the growth is elsewhere, then excessive perspiration in the extremities takes place. So great is this perspiration that pain is caused in the hands and feet.

"Easy sleep, restoration of appetite, cessation of vomiting and pain, follow on speedily. The time-factor referred to here is the



general rule, but cases have been known when recovery is protracted.

"In cases where the growth is malignant, with consequent pain, and the condition is superior to the healing power, then cessation of pain, sleep and normal appetite often ensure a peaceful passing.

"In tuberculosis, speedy results are often observed. The first is the lowering of the temperature to normal. Easement of the lungs soon follows, and hæmorrhage ceases. In two to three weeks, weight increases, and, unless a reverse takes place, a recovery can be looked for. When this happens, any cavity is found to be healed, and subsequent treatment is not necessary. Accompanying the first sign of healing there is a brightening or toning-up of the general condition.

"In rheumatism and associated complaints, healing is a slow process, according to the degree of hold the disease has on the patient. In slight cases, the complaint can be removed with one treatment. With serious cases the healing period will be a matter of months.

"The first sign of progress is the improvement in the general condition. This is followed by a reduction of the pain and rheumatic condition farthest away from the seat of the trouble. Progressive reduction then follows towards the centre until the most obstinate part is relieved.

"During long treatments it sometimes seems that progress is stayed for a while, but if the treatment is persisted in, new progress inevitably follows. It should be remembered that it is a triumph for the spirit healers if only the progress of the disease is stayed and the patient gets no worse. In chronic cases it is rare that normality returns, but the benefit received is substantial.

"The period of treatment in nervous disorders is variable. With mental unbalance the healing may be fairly rapid, a week or two. The first results are seen with the patient's desire for sleep. A more cheerful disposition follows on with the general faculties brighter, and a desire to 'do something.' The trouble

reduces progressively. If there are painful interludes, these become less severe, and at longer intervals.

"Head pains and noises are the most obstinate; a symptom of healing here is the desire to go out into the open air. This should be encouraged, for then relief is often obtained.

"Varicose ulcers and skin complaints are linked together because the signs of healing are similar. No rapid cures have been experienced. Sometimes weeks pass before betterment is noted. This is seen in a lessening of the 'angriness' at the centre; the colour lightens; and the affected area diminishes.

"There are also common symptoms which accompany treatment for circulatory, spinal, kidney troubles, and also displacements, but these are too detailed and unsuitable for publication here.

"Much can be said of the differing character of healing power applied for each class of disease. These changes are more noticeable with personal than absent healing.

"Signs of recovery are those noted through the writer's experience, but there is little doubt that the methods of the spirit healers associated with other healers are the same (irrespective of what the healer-medium may consider to be the process used).

"I assert that the quality of force needed to reduce any particular complaint is the same, no matter who the medium may be. Healing is the result of spirit force overcoming the physical condition. It is unreasonable to think that each healing guide has his own individual private healing ray or force. The guides have to direct known forces to secure a known result—as we do on earth. We do not know what these forces are, but we can see the common results of their application."

Edwards was never one to follow in the rut, to conform to convention merely because it is the custom. For many years, it had been an accepted practice in absent healing that patients should "tune in" to the healer at certain set times. Edwards was

the first, so far as I know, to depart from this custom, because he had discovered that it created some problems. Because of his experience, I wrote an article putting forward his assertion that absent healing is more effective when the patient does not know that it is taking place. Here was the new theory, as I wrote about it from matter the healer supplied me:

"Edwards points out that many of the best psychic impressions are received by people, apart from mediums, when the mind is dormant and not engaged in any concentrated mental activity.

"He contends that the average patient rarely possesses the ability correctly to attune himself to the spirit forces. His efforts to establish a mental link with the healer promotes a condition of persistent mental stress, anticipation, hoping for the end of the illness and perhaps seeking a 'miracle.' The patient thus induces a mental condition that is the reverse of relaxation.

"If the sufferer were able correctly to tune in, then he would be aware of the healing forces at work, but this rarely happens.

"In Edwards's experience, the greater number of cures have come when the patient has had no knowledge of the time at which the treatment is being given. These cures have not only been achieved with minor illnesses but with major diseases, including cancer and tuberculosis.

"As a result, Edwards has abandoned the practice of notifying patients of the times of absent-healing treatment. He has found, he says, that the result is a greater number of successes. Indeed, he contends that in every case under this new method progress has been reported by patients. Successes are achieved with children, the mentally unbalanced and patients for whom treatment was asked by someone else. In this last category the sufferers have included Roman Catholics, agnostics, atheists, all people to whom the idea of Spiritualism is not acceptable. In none of these cases has there been any co-operation.

"He points out that tenseness is always a barrier to psychic phenomena. At physical seances the difficulty is surmounted by

asking the sitters to sing. Now he considers he has overcome this obstacle in absent healing."

A few months later, I recorded that he was now dealing with three hundred cases every week, and that the average proportion of applications for healing for people who were non-Spiritualists was two out of three. Of these, more than eighty per cent reported definite progress. This increasing testimony, coming as it did from non-Spiritualists, was naturally of great value.

Even though these remarkable successes were becoming almost commonplace to the healer, he was always seeking to find out the means by which they happened and the laws responsible for their occurrence. It is still true to say, even now, that spirit healing is largely an unexplained process. One result of the fact that non-Spiritualists were seeking treatment is that they were forced, in many cases, to change their point of view about spiritual realities. After all, you cannot have a materialistic outlook when you are being cured by spiritual forces.

Here are extracts from an article I wrote at the time:

"When the patient is faced with the fact of recovery which began at the first date on the healer's letters, and which subsequently told not only of the healing, but of the course the healing would take, week by week, it provides an unanswerable argument of the reality of the ministrations of the spirit healing intelligences.

"All these reports are answered personally, and from the spirit-given information he receives the healer is often able to indicate the future course the recovery will take.

"There are other essentials, he says, for healing to be effective. First, there must be the sending-out of a thought-force by the applicant, or his friend, for help for a stated condition. Next, the healer allows his spirit self to become the superior over his 'physical' mind and establishes contact with his healing guides, thereby conveying to them the thought-picture of the patient and his need.

"The more complete this picture is the greater are the chances of success. The spirit healer then contacts the patient and, when possible, the healing is given.

"Silver Birch (a spirit guide) recently indicated that healing of this character, that is, when no time appointments is made, takes place at night when the patient is asleep.

"Many letters speak of this, and record how at times the patient becomes conscious of a 'presence' of 'someone there,' and at times of the actual 'feeling' of a manipulation.

"One letter, for example, says: 'It felt like very strong fingers moving my backbone, then for a second there was a stabbing pain, and I remembered no more. . . . In the morning my back was easy to move, and I have not had any pain since.'

"As records are kept and evidence collected, it becomes apparent that absent healing, like personal healing, is not a vague, abstract affair, but rather an exact psychic science requiring both specialised effort in the intercession and by the healing guides.

"There is no limit to the powers of the spirit healers. On occasion, as Edwards reads the application, he sometimes thinks, 'This is not possible,' but he never fails to try. It is then his turn to be amazed as he hears that the so-called 'impossible' has become a fact."

## CHAPTER IV

### PATIENTS SEEN IN VISIONS

IN turning the pages of the scrapbooks, I realise how much space in *Psychic News* I was compelled to give to the labours of Edwards, simply because he was obtaining successes. Editors are frequently accused of having favourites. They are always receiving letters from publicity-seekers who do not realise that you can only publicise what is newsworthy.

I was receiving regularly letters from people who had read these accounts I published and who told me with gratitude of the beneficial results they had obtained from the spirit healing. It would be wearisome to give detail after detail of these many cures. All I can do is to pick out the highlights in the healer's meteoric career, as revealed in his scrapbooks.

By way of contrast, here is an account I published by Edwards of a psychic vision of his first patient:

"The only way in which a psychic healer discovers his gift of healing is by seeking an opportunity to serve. It so happened with me. Through observation, I had become convinced of the reality of Survival, and was endeavouring to develop what psychic gifts I possessed. I had arranged a home circle and was also attending a church circle.

"It was at the church developing circle that a woman spoke of an acquaintance who had just been admitted to Brompton Hospital suffering from galloping consumption, with hæmorrhage and pleurisy. I told her I was going to try the experiment of absent healing. On closing my eyes and 'tuning in,' I was surprised to see upon the screen of my conscious mind the animated

picture of a hospital ward, with attention focused on the third patient from the end of the row.

"Subsequently, the description of the ward, the position and characteristics of the patient were confirmed in detail. I have never been in Brompton Hospital.

"At the next weekly visit to the patient, it was found that not only had the hæmorrhage ceased and that the pleuritic condition had disappeared, but the high temperature was down to normal. The doctors spoke of an 'amazing recovery.' Three weeks later, the patient was well enough to be sent to a convalescent home, and before long was back at home and at work. This occurred ten years ago, and there has been no recurrence of the disease.

"I considered the possibility of coincidence with this healing, but it was rapidly followed by two more major cases of healing that removed all doubt from my mind and gave me that essential confidence in the spirit healing guides associated with me.

"It is often the case in the early days of mediumship that it seems that the spirit guides excel in the initial efforts. This was definitely so in my case, for within a few weeks after the case already mentioned two more followed quickly.

"The second case was of a woman who came into my place of business. She did not know I was there, and claims she was impelled to make the visit. She then recognised me as one who had spoken at the local Spiritualist church, and told me that her husband had been sent home to die from a cancer in the lung. He was an agnostic and did not know of his malady. I said I would begin absent healing for him that night, which I did. A 'miracle' took place.

"The sick man rose up the next morning early and made his wife a cup of tea. She could not believe her eyes, for her husband looked well. She sent for the rest of the family and, in her words, 'they could only sit and look at their father in amazement.'

"The growth had gone in one night. He began to put on weight in the first week. Hitherto he had been wasting away. A

doctor at St. Thomas's Hospital could not understand it, and it was with this doctor's permission that the patient returned to work in three weeks.

"I heard from the wife in 1944, again to ask for help for the man as he was 'poorly.' When he was healed of cancer this man was approximately sixty years old. He lived for a further nine years before help was again necessary, and as far as I know he is alive today.

"The third case followed immediately after. The sister of a girl who was dangerously ill attended a Spiritualist church in Brixton. The medium told her of her sister's grave condition and said she should find a healer of my name in Balham. At that time I was unknown in the movement, and I am sure the medium did not know of me.

"The sister went that evening to the Balham Spiritualist Church, where she obtained my address and called upon me late at night.

"As I was told the story for the second time, my spirit self travelled and I saw the bedroom with the girl in bed. I told her that I would call the next day, and that the fever would go during the night. When I went there, I saw the same room and the same girl I had 'seen' psychically the night before. Her temperature had dropped to normal.

"I gave the sick girl healing treatment. Two hours afterwards, she vomited and so alarmed her parents that they sent for a doctor at once. He said she was very sick and must be kept very quiet. She was too ill to be moved to hospital.

"When I called the next day, I knew 'within me' that the crisis was over and I told the parents she would be convalescent in three days. The mother shook her head in disbelief. Nevertheless, the girl was able to sit up in bed and eat a normal dinner. When I saw her three days later, she was up and dressed. The story does not end there.

"The girl told me she had been in a sanatorium for consump-



tion for two years, that one lung had been stopped up, and that she had to go to hospital every month for air refills. Healing treatment was given to her, and for the next three months she could take no additional air. The doctors could not understand this, and sent her back to the sanatorium for observation and examination.

"When she was examined, they found that the lung was sound. It is interesting to note that the doctors expected the air-refill treatment to take a number of years.

"These first three cases, with their outstanding results, proved beyond all doubt to me that supernormal healing powers had been used through me, and convinced me of my healing gift. From this time onwards, the healing has gone on without ceasing. There were occasions when every suitable room in my house was filled with patients waiting their turn for healing.

"After my day's work, I would begin healing at seven p.m., and continue until eleven p.m. I found on these occasions there was no fatigue. On the contrary, at the end of a four-hour session I used to feel fitter, more alert and brighter than when I started.

"I have not had one day's illness since I became conscious of the gift of healing. On occasions, when I have felt colds or influenza approaching, invariably the threatened ill condition has gone overnight.

"I hold the view that if healers and mediums who are unwell would approach their spirit mentors with the same earnestness with which they work for others, then they can be the means of curing themselves.

"Recently the work has turned more to absent healing, though contact healing is often given—frequently in queer places, in my shop, in a café, in a taxicab and in my home. The absent healing, however, has now become the major activity.

"There are occasionally reports of no seeming progress, but

they are rare. The overwhelming majority of patients are able to report progressively that healing is bettering conditions."

On the next page of the scrapbook I see an account from a Yorkshire vicar whose illness prevented him taking Sunday services. Having read the many stories I had published, he had asked to be put into touch with Edwards. The vicar said that his many setbacks had given him a feeling of despair. "I particularly want guidance in this matter," he said, "divine guidance, of course, and I have been moved to think and believe that this guidance will be forthcoming through the medium of your healing ministry."

Explaining that he was sixty-two years of age the vicar said he could not take Sunday services "owing to illness which has consisted of hæmorrhage from the lung, general debility and sickness. My doctor seems to think that with adequate rest over a period of time I should be able to resume, in a quiet way, my Sunday duties. I have been hoping for this for some time now, but do not seem to be making the progress I might have expected.

"I should be so grateful if I might be allowed to place myself entirely in your hands for your 'absent healing' treatment. I would gladly carry out anything you may suggest.

"I do most sincerely believe in spiritual healing, but realise that a great deal depends upon the patient and the faith that is in him. 'Lord, increase my faith' must be my constant prayer, and then like the nobleman of old may I come to believe the word of Christ spoken through your mediumship and so be healed of my disease. God bless you in your noble work of healing service.'"

Edwards immediately gave absent treatment, and the vicar wrote again, saying: "I am glad and thankful to be able to report progress even at this early stage. A full week has now elapsed and there has been no hæmorrhage. I am coming no longer to dread going to bed, as a tiresome cough has subsided, and for the last three nights I have been blessed with refreshing and natural sleep

and there has, to use your own words, been 'an inflow of strength and inward uplifting' for which I am truly thankful."

Three weeks after his first letter, he wrote to Edwards: "This is just a line to report progress. Last Sunday, I was able to celebrate the Holy Communion in my church. It was an effort, but I felt far better at the end than I did at the beginning of the service."

Now we come to one of the most remarkable highlights, the case of an American paratrooper, whose letter to *Psychic News* made front-page news. He is Sergeant A. F. Le Roy, who, writing from the Y.M.C.A., Regent Street, London, W.1., sent this remarkable story:

"I am returning to the U.S.A. next week. Before embarking I want to get a story off my mind.

"Last autumn, I broke the bones in my ankle in a parachute drop. I was in hospital for eight weeks, which stopped me going to Europe with my unit, for the bones did not set right and gave me a lot of pain. My friend had a copy of your paper which told of a healer who could cure people without them knowing of the matter. I said it was 'all hooey,' but my friend wanted me to try it out on my foot. So it was agreed that he would write to the healer without my knowing when. The healer's name was Mr. Harry Edwards, whose address I have forgotten.

"Two weeks ago we had a farewell party. I did some dancing, but not a lot, for my ankle was stiff and giving me a lot of pain. Anyhow, we had a lot of fun and I did not get down to bed until the early morning. I don't know how long I slept, but I suddenly woke up and in the light from the corridor I saw a man arrayed in a white overall standing by my bed with his back to me.

"He then seemed to put his hand right through my blankets, gripped my leg underneath the calf and brought the leg up through the blankets so I could see it. He had a grip as strong as an iron wrench. With his other hand he grasped the foot and pulled it outwards away from the leg, then with his fingers moved the bones in the ankle and let the foot go back. As he did

this, a great pain shot up my leg from the foot to the head. It was so paralytically strong I was helpless and could not even cry out. He placed my leg and foot again through the blankets, turned to me and smiled as if to say, 'O.K.' When he looked at me his face seemed to glow with a light much whiter than anything I have seen.

"All this must have happened very quickly. For the moment I thought I was back in hospital, and it was only after he had disappeared that I saw I was in my billet with the corridor light on and I could hear a pal snoring.

"I can still see everything that happened very vividly. I am sure I was awake the whole time; indeed, I got out of bed and looked at my foot. Where it had been held there was a white band around it as if the pressure had sent the blood out of it. This white band could be seen faintly in the morning. I tried the foot. All stiffness and pain had gone, and from that time it has been as fit as the other one.

"I told this to the doctor on sick parade. He seemed to believe me and told me that the ankle was O.K. I only met my friend today—whom I mentioned at the beginning—and when I told him about it he was dumb. He cast back to see when he wrote to the healer and found it was just two days before the above happened. He got the healer's reply that help would be given on the day the experience took place. He lost the healer's letter, or I would send it to you and also his address. I would be enormously obliged if you will let him know about this and I will write you from my home later on, so that I can get into touch with him direct.

"I am not attempting to explain it. All I know is that after months of pain and stiffness the above did take place on the day the healer said that healing would be given. I am going home next week. I have had a good time in your country and now I have something more to remember it by than any amount of dollars could buy."

Curiously enough, not long afterwards, a member of the R.A.F. who was receiving absent healing from Edwards also had a remarkable psychic experience to relate that was connected with the parachutist's testimony. This happening was so vivid that it caused his comrades to sleep with the lights on and with bayonets at their side. This is the experience which he described in a letter to Edwards:

"I had retired at about 11.30 p.m. and I was alone in the cottages at Dover on the cliff-edge, my room being shared in the normal way by another Air Force colleague. I was immediately conscious on turning out the light of someone standing looking at me from the opposite corner of my room. I was definitely not asleep because I heard voices from the next room, which I recognised as our unit cook and his son. I appeared to be lifted from my bed and turned over face downwards, and was gently lowered to the bed, wet with perspiration. What happened next I do not know, for I was blacked out.

"The next morning, after an exceptionally good night's rest for me, I received a parcel of *Psychic News*. I was literally pulled to the middle copy and your photograph was on the front page with a narrative of the case of the American soldier. Next night my room-mate and I were asleep and were awakened by the other members of the unit angrily asking us what we thought we were doing at that time of night. They swore that they heard someone walk up our staircase which leads only to our two rooms and walk into their room and lift the blankets twice and then walk out. Of course, we were asleep and everyone in the unit denied emphatically any knowledge of it. I was accused of conjuring up 'spooks' and badly frightening everyone. During the last two nights everyone slept with lights on and bayonets by their sides.

"Since that night I have progressed very much. My outlook has changed for the better and I sleep more soundly and feel very much happier. I have never slept so well for years."

Edwards received a letter from another patient describing a similar happening. She was having absent healing for a knee joint which was semi-locked by arthritis. The patient wrote:

"A most amazing thing has happened and I hardly know how to write to you. The night before I received your letter saying that you had placed me on your healing list, I woke up in the middle of the night to see you standing by my bed.

"There were also some others with you whose faces were not so plain as yours. I recognised you at once from your photograph in *Psychic News*. You just nodded your head and wiped one hand over the other, and then you were not there, nor were the others who were with you.

"I am a nervous type and yet I did not feel alarmed as I thought I should have been. I was quite happily calm. I am sure I was not asleep and dreamt it, for I remember waking up so well. The thought did come to me that I was dreaming and then something happened to prove I was indeed awake—and this was that I could move my knee easily and without pain.

"This was proof to me that I was awake and of the wonderful healing. My knee is now quite good and as free, if not freer, than the other one."

At this stage the healer reported a significant development in his postbag. He was receiving applications from medical men from all over the country asking for healing for themselves, their wives, relatives and close friends. This, of course, was the best testimony to the efficacy of spirit healing. It was very rare that they solicited absent healing for their patients. After all, for a doctor to tell a patient that he cannot cure, but he will try absent healing from a medium, is too much to expect.

I see in the scrapbook an interesting letter which throws a revealing light on Edwards's attitude to money. The letter, which I published, was from an insurance agent who wrote:

"On my rounds I often discuss Spiritualist matters with my clients. A woman in very straitened circumstances, due to

domestic reasons, was suffering severely. I suggested that Mr. Harry Edwards would be able to help her, but she was worried because she could not pay anything. I told her if she explained her circumstances no charge would be made.

"Mr. Edwards replied that he was starting healing for her at once and not only reassured her that there was no need in her case to send any donation, but sent a donation to help her. When I hear criticism that our mediums are always 'on the make' this example shows the other side of the picture.

"She tells me that from the time she received the healer's letter she felt a great strength come to her and the obvious improvement in her manner and appearance showed how real the benefit was."

It was at about this time that an event of the gravest import for mankind occurred. The first atom bomb was released over Japan. It brought a speedy end to the war, but it marked a crisis in the destiny of mankind.

Edwards was one of the first to see a parallel between atomic energy and the power used in spirit healing and all forms of psychic phenomena. He wrote this very interesting article:

"The recent development in man's control of atomic energy should bring a closer understanding of the processes involved in a number of phases of psychic activity. The scientist of today, by associating different forms of atomic energy, is able to create new substances, with new potentials, such as radio-active matter, explosives, etc. By his treatment of these energies he produces law-governed effects. The very fact that man with his limited knowledge of these primal energies is able so to manipulate electrons, neutrons and protons to create new forms of matter brings much that happens in the seance room and in spirit healing within the limits of human comprehension.

"In the seance room, conditions are established in which atomic matter is *created*, such as when a spirit being materialises for the time, or when ectoplasmic instruments are formed. Substances

so produced are atomic in construction. They have weight, are often of heavy density, possess temperatures and can operate normal physical matter. The immediate dispersal of the created substance can be easily understood as the 'holding' force is withdrawn and the materialised form reverts at once into the primal energies from which it was produced.

"This performance has been carried out thousands of times in seance rooms. It has its parallel in the atomic bomb which directs energy to the breaking-up of other atomic structures and returning them to their primitive forms. The tremendous difference between what takes place in the seance room and the discharging of the atomic bomb is that the former is a well-controlled, creative effort carried out easily and naturally through the advanced wisdom of the spirit operators, as compared with the giant factories employing scores of thousands of people, using many tons of material, etc. The two processes are as the sublime is to the most crude.

"Had scientists devoted sympathetic attention towards the understanding of the psychic processes utilised by their spirit contemporaries, instead of brutally condemning the evidence we have given as 'impossible, against the laws that govern matter' and therefore fraudulent, the advance of human wisdom would have been all the greater today. Such advance would not have been directed to the wholesale destruction of humanity, but for the furtherance of the best interests of the whole human family.

"It has often been witnessed that growths, tumours, osseous and other formations have 'disappeared' under the healer's efforts. This has been deemed 'impossible' by the medical faculty. Yet, now, it becomes a practical proposition in the light of the latest scientific achievement. Whenever a human physical disharmony is removed by the spirit healer it must mean that an atomic change has taken place. This change can only be in the atomic construction of the cells that form human tissue.



"Human knowledge permits us to obtain ordered change by the association of one atomic property with another. Further, by the division of the atomic forces, ionisation and radio reception are obtained. If man is able to do this, is it so unreasonable that still wiser discarnate minds can carry out predetermined changes in the atomic formations and associations within the human body in order to remove disease?

"Scientists so far are more concerned with the forces that comprise the various grades of atoms. Their further study will lead them along the road already indicated to them by our spirit mentors, that each atomic energy is a varied radiation of ether.

"It will be further seen that some forces, such as magnetism, cohesion, radio, electric light, etc., are in themselves vibrations of ether, the basic substance of the universe. The potentials, and manipulation of the etheric potentials, are not only a heritage for man, but also of the spirit people who, unfettered by the limitations of the physical body and realm, are far more easily able to direct these basic powers, as witness the phenomena of healing and seance-room manifestations.

"The most difficult to understand of spirit action is that of absent healing, but this too now comes within the orbit of mental vision. Firstly, there is the transmitting through the tuning-in of the spirit part of the healer to the spirit healers themselves, directing the thought-requests for healing. The spirit healers are then able to direct the correctly-toned qualitative forces necessary to obtain removal of unwanted atomic substances and the restoration by change of the affected cells.

"It has been claimed that by concentrated effort costing £500,000,000 science has advanced one hundred years in five. If a tithe of this effort had been expended by the scientific and medical experts in intelligently trying to understand the work of the spirit operators, the whole code of human conduct would have been immeasurably bettered. Cancer (as an example) is still an enigma. Many thousands die because of it every year.

The sum total of mortality and suffering from this one disease alone exceeds the total war misery.

“It is beyond the power of the spirit guides to give any information regarding its cure that is but one step beyond man’s comprehension. The ability of the guides to communicate knowledge is limited by man’s prevailing knowledge. Had there been the right co-operation with our best trained minds in psychic research, we could have looked forward to an era of wisdom in which the atomic bomb would never have had the need to be created.”

## CHAPTER V

### PROVING IT IN PUBLIC

NOW Harry Edwards embarked on one of the most decisive stages in his healing mission which was to lead him to demonstrate his gifts publicly up and down the country. He had not planned to do so. In my view, it was clearly a case of spirit guidance.

Like so many important happenings it began in an almost obscure manner. He was giving an address on spirit healing in a small Spiritualist society in Baker Street, North-West London, when he felt an irresistible urge to prove the truth of his statements. He was telling his hearers about the reality of spirit healing and the remarkable things that had been accomplished by it. The overwhelming idea came to him that instead of *talking* about healing he should *perform* it there and then, and this would be more effective than a speech. He asked whether any in his audience were suffering from illness. A few people put up their hands and Edwards offered to treat them immediately. In every case they testified to betterment as a result of his treatment.

Edwards thought, "If I can demonstrate this faculty to a handful of people, why cannot I demonstrate it in front of hundreds?" Soon, he announced that he was ready to give public healing demonstrations, and he was besieged with applications from all over the land.

The publicity, which had been largely confined to psychic journals and to occasional mentions in his local newspapers, grew as editors all over the country found they had a remarkable story to tell their readers. Here was a man visiting their town and prov-

ing the ability to heal in front of hundreds and sometimes thousands of people. This was something that could not be ignored.

Journalists and reporters are by nature hard-boiled and sceptical. They move in a world where they are trained to look for facts. In the case of public healing, not only could they witness the demonstrations, but they could interview the patients who received treatment and obtain first-hand information of the medical diagnoses and the results of the spirit healing. So, what was originally a trickle now broadened into a deep stream that later became a flood, when national newspapers had the facts of spirit healing thrust on them.

From this time onwards, page after page of the scrapbooks contain accounts in provincial newspapers of the public demonstrations given by Edwards. Before I quote some of the outstanding examples, I can best give you an illustration of what occurred at these meetings by reprinting what I wrote after I attended one of them. Here it is:

"Thanks to Harry Edwards, thousands have now witnessed demonstrations of spontaneous spirit healing which must seem like 'miracles' to the uninitiated.

"During the twenty-five years and more which I have devoted to a critical study of psychic phenomena in all their varied forms, I have witnessed many extraordinary manifestations of spirit power. The only acid test of psychic healing is the simple one—does it work? Harry Edwards proves that it does by taking his ministry of healing into the open so that hundreds can witness it for themselves.

"I place in the front rank the examples of public healing performed by Edwards after I had spoken on this subject to an audience of five hundred people in a South London suburb. He began with an explanation that he was only the medium, the instrument whom higher intelligences were able to use to bring cures and relief to sufferers. Then he asked sick people who were present—some had come from Manchester and Leeds—to

volunteer for treatment, choosing those illnesses where alleviation could be demonstrated.

"There were no 'stage effects,' no lowering of the lights, no attempts at evangelical fervour, there was not even hymn singing, yet the effect was both dramatic and remarkable. One after another, patients came on to the platform and in every case healing was successfully given.

"I recall the deaf woman who had not heard the spoken word since childhood. It was pathetic to notice that she spoke only in whispers. Edwards made a few passes over her ears and then asked if there was any improvement. It was obvious that the woman was lip-reading. Yes, she could hear what was said! Next the healer moved his head farther away from the patient and repeated the question. She could still hear. And he went on increasing the distance . . . and she still heard. Finally he clicked his finger-nails near her. Yes, she could hear that also. Is it any wonder that the audience broke into applause?

"Equally as dramatic were the cases of the partially blind who were helped on to the platform. 'I can see a little,' said one woman, 'but when it gets dark I cannot see anything.'

" 'Can you see the flowers on the table?' asked the healer. The woman bent and peered. Yes, she could faintly discern their outline, and she thought they were white. Edwards closed her eyes and made a few passes over them. The woman was asked to look at the flowers again. Now she affirmed her vision was clearer. A few more passes, and the flowers became still clearer. Each time they were moved farther away from her. Finally she could distinguish the little black stamens.

"Two outstanding cures were of women who suffered from curvature of the spine. Now there is no mistaking this affliction. When the first patient sat on a chair with her back to the audience, the distinct curvature of the spine was discernible. The healer outlined it with his fingers. Then he placed one hand over the affected region and put his other arm around the patient. He

seemed to jerk one hand . . . and, wonder of wonders, the curvature was no longer there! Perspiration streamed from him, and it was obvious that he was controlled by an intelligence other than his own. Behind him on the platform sat members of his healing band, with outstretched hands, giving their added power.

"You will say all this is undoubtedly amazing, but something far more remarkable happened. 'Is there anyone in the audience who is sceptical about healing?' asked Edwards. At the back of the hall, a young man put up his hand. He was invited to come forward and take his place on the platform. He did so.

"'You are sceptical?' asked Edwards. 'Yes,' was the reply. 'Well, then, you are going to help me to heal this woman,' said the healer.

"It was the second case of curvature of the spine. We witnessed a performance similar to the last, except that this time the sceptic's hands were placed on the spine, after he had first satisfied himself about the nature and length of the curvature. The healer placed one hand over the sceptic's two hands and his other arm around the patient. Then came the straining, the influx of power, the jerk, and in a few seconds another back was straight.

"'Are you satisfied that there is no more curvature?' the healer asked the sceptic. 'Yes,' was the reply. 'You, too, could be a healer,' Edwards told him.

"I spoke to this erstwhile sceptic after the meeting. He had come out of curiosity, but he assured me that after what he had witnessed he would strive to develop his power so that he could heal others.

"I watched, too, while a girl with a paralysed leg was made to walk. When she was asked to do so, stepping out with the affected leg, she said, 'I can't.'

"'Yes, you can,' said the healer. 'You only think you can't!'

"He took her by the hand and . . . gingerly she placed the foot forward which had given her all the trouble. The first paces were slow, but soon she was walking almost normally.

"There was a woman with a large goitre, which Edwards practically removed in its entirety by a process which I can only describe as 'smoothing' it away with his hands. It was almost as if he were using an invisible vanishing cream. When he had finished stroking the goitre, he turned to the woman and said, 'It has gone.' With surprise registered on her face she lifted her hand—but the goitre was no longer there.

"A similar demonstration was given in the case of a man with a fairly large cyst near his ear. Edwards did not completely remove it, but he reduced its size until it resembled a small pea.

"There was the man suffering from rheumatism who could not move his right arm or straighten his back. He left the platform triumphant after showing several times that the ability to bend his arm and back was restored to him. And many times during the meeting, between the healing of other patients, Edwards called to this man in the audience and he moved his arm and bent his back.

"So outstanding was this demonstration of healing that, in a few cases, healing was given to people while they sat in the audience. One woman suffering from arthritis was asked to move her legs, knees and ankles, which at first she said she could not do. Gradually she succeeded, until she was almost touching her toes by bending down. It was she who volunteered that she could feel the pain leaving her.

"It was a sight I shall never forget. I watched despair replaced by hope and was moved by the fervent 'God bless you' uttered by relieved sufferers, many of whom left the platform with tears of gratitude streaming from their eyes.

"The Bible talks of 'miracles' of healing said to have been performed two thousand years ago. They may have happened, but there is no evidence for them. You can see the 'miracles' of healing performed by Harry Edwards in public. And seeing is believing. . . ."

At St. Albans, which is a cathedral city, one of the first to be

visited, a clergyman spoke from the platform. He was the Rev. Vellham Pitts, who dealt first with the history of healing from the early days of Christianity and ended by describing what the newspaper calls "his own miraculous cure after all other methods had failed."

The same newspaper referred to Edwards in this fashion. It said that he was "advertised as a well-known author and healer, and that he dealt with the scientific aspect of healing and told of cures within his own personal knowledge."

The demonstration was dismissed with this one ungrammatical and non-committal sentence: "The speaker followed by applying his theory to members of the audience suffering from various complaints who came forward." Yet this demonstration was doubtless the most important event in St. Albans that day.

At Cambridge, the local newspaper reported, "People who had been suffering for many years proclaimed themselves healed during a demonstration of spirit healing by Mr. Harry Edwards."

As this is one of the first provincial newspapers to describe a demonstration by Edwards, it is worth quoting its account:

"One of the greatest cures was that of a woman who had had a dislocated spine for twenty-two years. A friend felt a curvature of the bone going outwards and afterwards testified that it was straight. The woman herself agreed that the lump had gone.

"Another woman who had had spine trouble for sixteen years found her pain gone, and Mr. Edwards explained that he had altered the bones where the pain had been; while a man with a bad hip, who was cured after some manipulation, was told that one of his bones had been pressing on a nerve.

"Expressions of wonder were drawn from the audience when a man who had been paralysed down one side was able to hold a pencil and write after a fashion, and the cure of another man who had trouble with his arm was finally completed by putting a bone right. A woman with rheumatism said her pain had gone, and one with thrombosis found her knees less swollen.



"A person who was totally deaf and could speak but little, said she could hear after treatment; another who had been deaf in one ear pronounced herself cured, and a third thought her condition improved.

"The parents of a nine-year-old boy, with contracted muscles, whose legs were chiefly affected, was told that there was a lack of response between the mind, nerves and muscles of the leg, and he must be given more opportunity of using his legs. It was suggested that he should be put in a pen with bars running longways, so that he could hold himself up on his legs."

In the midst of these newspaper accounts there is printed this letter from a hospital sister, who asked that her name should not be published because of medical etiquette, written after she attended a public demonstration by Edwards:

"I have had fifteen years' experience of hospital nursing, and as a sister at — Hospital I have had many harrowing experiences. But never in my fifteen years' service have I had experiences like those of last Tuesday. I could see that diseases that came up for treatment were very deep-seated and would need a lengthy period of patient nursing to reduce the disease in the ordinary way. Yet I saw these reductions take place in a very little while because of the Spiritualist healer, Mr. Harry Edwards.

"When he seemed to take on a case of paralysis with full confidence I looked for failure. The patient was a young woman who came in an invalid chair and whose movements were contorted. On rising from her chair she was able to walk with ease and freedom of movement. When the healer asked the audience to sing a waltz tune I could not believe my eyes—that the patient was waltzing with natural grace.

"I am thought by my friends as being very hard, and I was surprised that tears were rolling down my face. I glanced round to see if anyone had noticed me, and felt strangely comforted when I saw a man crying, too.

"I still feel incredulous about what I actually saw, but I did see

it happen. If only I had the hands of that healer in my daily work, what would I not do? I cannot talk to the doctors or staff about it, and it will ease the burden telling it to you. While I still feel excited over what happened I ask you to treat my name as confidential."

Soon after this happening there was published in *Psychic News* the results of one year of healing by Edwards. This revealed that he had received approximately 24,000 appeals for help, and in 18,500 cases complete or partial recovery was reported. It must be borne in mind that in the vast majority of cases the results were achieved wholly by absent healing.

Typical of the results were the statistics for one week's letters from patients being treated by absent healing. Of these 320 showed improvement, and forty-three indicated no progress. When you bear in mind that the healer's services were sought as a last resort, the figures are remarkable.

One feature of the reports of his public meetings is the fact that they were attended by visitors from towns fifty and a hundred miles away.

I prefer to make my extracts from the ordinary provincial newspapers because they cannot be accused of any partiality towards the healer. Indeed, it is obvious when you read them that they are struggling to overcome their own scepticism when confronted with results for which normally there is no explanation. Where the reporter or the editor is alert more space is given. Where they are unenterprising they resort to their stereotyped descriptions. "

At Ramsgate, for example, the newspaper reported, "Men and women suffering from rheumatism, arthritis, partial deafness and blindness, claimed to be cured after coming into contact with Mr. Harry Edwards."

Describing what happened with two cases of deafness, the newspaper said that both cases claimed that their hearing had improved.

A small boy, suffering with a fixed eye, was able to move it from side to side, a fact which was supported by his mother's testimony.

The account ends with the words: "All the people treated admitted they had received beneficial aid, which was proved when limbs, which they had previously been unable to move, were manipulated with comparative ease."

Among the first towns to be visited were Newcastle-on-Tyne, Nottingham, Ventnor, Portsmouth, Oxford, Birmingham, Sheffield and Luton.

Now the scrapbook tells a dramatic story that occurred during the war. Transport in a warship was arranged for Edwards so that he could treat a Guernsey man seriously ill from an internal complaint. Edwards had already flown to the island, but the pilot found it impossible to land owing to low clouds.

When the patient's wife could not arrange another air passage for the healer, she interviewed the Military Movement Control in Guernsey, saying the only hope of saving her husband was for him to receive treatment from Edwards.

Within twenty-four hours, the War Office in London had been approached, sanction given for a priority passage, the naval authorities were informed, and arrangements made for Edwards to travel to Guernsey in H.M. Corvette *Empire Safeguard*.

When Edwards arrived at Southampton Docks, he was met by an Army officer, escorted to the corvette and "handed over" for safe custody. He arrived with a "secret" embarkation card on which his "duty" was described as "Government business."

Not only that, but on the way back, as the aeroplane in which he travelled was delayed by a storm, a special car was waiting for him at Southampton, and the steamer to the Isle of Wight, where Edwards was spending his holiday, was held up by the harbour authorities until he arrived on board.

The trip to Guernsey was part of Edwards's "holiday." In

addition, he conducted a healing meeting at Ventnor and also continued his absent healing of patients.

Not long after this dramatic happening, Edwards himself was a "war victim." He was bombed out of his home and had to remove to fresh headquarters at Ewell, Surrey. Soon there came a hint of another change, made essential by the constantly increasing scope of the healing activities. He started to negotiate for the purchase of Burrows Lea, his present Sanctuary at Shere, about half an hour's journey from London. The healer felt that the atmosphere of this country house, accessible to London yet hidden away in the pine belt of Surrey, would provide ideal surroundings for his ministry. Though it meant overstraining his own financial resources, Edwards finally acquired what is now his present headquarters.

In August 1946 the first announcement was made that the new home would "provide a Sanctuary for spiritual healing in as perfect a setting as possible, where the spirit and natural forces can be freely drawn upon." This aim, he said, was beginning to be realised with the purchase of Burrows Lea, with its freedom from all congestion. The house and grounds were described as being bordered by silver birch, fir and pine woods, with open views of the countryside. Nearby was the unspoilt village of Shere, which has been claimed as one of Britain's most noted beauty spots.

Edwards announced his hope that members and friends of the Spiritualist movement would visit the Sanctuary and enjoy its amenities, its gardens and woodlands. With characteristic tolerance he added that other healers would also be welcome, and advice and help would be given to those who were developing the healing gift. He was frank enough to mention that the acquiring of the Sanctuary had imposed severe financial liabilities and involved a very considerable loan from the bank. Nevertheless he felt sure that the project, while ambitious, was worthy of the cause he was endeavouring to serve.

Meanwhile, he continued with his public demonstrations. Here, in the scrapbook, I see a lengthy account in a Croydon newspaper which describes him as "The man with healing hands." The Press report states that some of the cases which the healer treated were remarkable. One was a woman who had been unable to walk without crutches for three years. Said the newspaper:

"She came to the hall on crutches. The demonstrator helped her out of her seat into the gangway and induced her to walk up and down. He ended by waltzing with her.

"In another and somewhat similar case in which the patient could not properly bend either legs or arms, the woman walked round the hall and up the steps to the gallery. In yet another case, a woman who could not bring her arm sideways across her body did so after very short treatment.

"It should be stated that there was little that could be termed manipulative treatment. In the cases of curvature of the spine and stiff joints, there were approaches to manipulative treatment, but it was always gentle and persuasive rather than strenuous or violent.

"There was a really pitiable case of a boy with curvature of the spine who was carried on to the platform. The nearest approach to manipulative surgery was applied in this case, and the boy cried during the process. Yet he ceased crying before the treatment was concluded, and with assistance walked down the steps from the platform.

"A little girl aged about six was treated for curvature of the spine and for defective vision. To all appearances the spine was straightened and the vision improved.

"The case of a woman from Worcester Park with an impediment in her speech, the demonstrator dealt with from the platform while she remained in the gallery. He induced her to talk and she said 'Surrey' quite clearly although she said at the start of the treatment that her chief stumbling block was to say words commencing with 's.' "

A few months later, a Luton newspaper referred to the "remarkably dramatic and, at times, emotional scenes" which were witnessed by a packed audience at a town hall demonstration. "In this account I have written only of what I saw and heard," states the reporter.

"In four cases, at least, the improvement in the patient's condition was visible and made a deep impression on the audience.

"One of the first cases to be treated was also one of the most dramatic. It was that of a man who had suffered for thirteen years with disseminated sclerosis and could walk only with the aid of sticks. Mr. Edwards held his hands, and within a few minutes the patient was moving his legs freely, a thing he said he had not done for ten years.

"A young woman suffering from arthritis came on to the platform. Mr. Edwards manipulated her hands and got her fingers working freely, then encouraged her to lift first one leg, then another to the height of a chair-seat.

"An elderly woman came next. Her condition was similar. Mr. Edwards got her to move each finger in turn and finally flexed her wrists.

"He encouraged her to walk up and down the steps of the platform, and she ended by taking two steps at a time. 'I haven't done such a thing for years,' was her comment.

"One of the most remarkable cases was that of a young woman, who said she could see only dimly with her left eye. Dipping his fingers in a glass of water, Mr. Edwards laid them over her eye and then asked her to look at the audience. She immediately said she could see much better, and Mr. Edwards told his audience that in her case healing had been effected even before he himself had actively co-operated in the treatment."

The next page contains a cutting from a Guildford newspaper, which tells how "people suffering from paralysis, blindness, disseminated sclerosis, arthritis, deafness and curvature of the

spine were taken up to the platform from the crowded hall and those who were too ill to move were visited by the demonstrator, who went among the audience.

"In several cases there appeared to be a marked improvement in the condition after treatment. A young man with a paralysed hand was able to write, and a deaf woman said she could hear and converse more easily."

Soon there comes an indication that the healer's postbag had now reached the figure of two thousand letters a week. As the majority of letters requested healing for more than one patient, it means that Edwards was dealing with far more than two thousand people.

There is a striking testimony from a Carlisle woman, who writes to the editor of a newspaper to tell of the successes that followed her journey of more than three hundred miles to obtain treatment from Edwards:

"I have been suffering from curvature of the spine for over thirty years and suffered much pain from it. Doctors and osteopaths could not cure me, but Mr. Edwards succeeded where they failed. He at once put his fingers on the exact bones which were causing the trouble, and I am delighted to say I have had no pain since."

Now the Press reports mention a new departure—an invitation from Edwards to doctors who were present to check the patients' complaints and to state frankly what was the result of the treatment. Though medical etiquette forbids their names being given, in every case the doctors made public their tribute to the successes achieved by the healer when he returned to South-West London, near the original start of his healing mission, and gave a demonstration at Tooting. The local newspaper devoted three columns to what it describes as "one of the most amazing meetings" ever held in Tooting. It says:

"Half an hour before the scheduled time, the hall was full. The audience came in cars, in bath chairs, by sticks or crutches, and

helped by relatives on foot, ranging from the very young to those of riper years. Hundreds of applications for tickets had to be refused, and many travelled great distances to be present."

After a short address the healer announced that he was ready to give treatment, and selected eight different ailments for his demonstration. Says the newspaper:

"Stressing that nothing was pre-arranged, Mr. Edwards called for two persons suffering from arthritis. The first case, a woman, was helped to the platform. She had had a stiff leg for twelve years and was unable to walk properly. Mr. Edwards placed his hands upon her, and, aided by his assistant, held her closely for a few seconds. Gradually she was able to swing her legs, the pain went, and amidst applause she walked normally back to her seat in the audience.

"The second sufferer had been afflicted for over eleven years, and, treated in a similar manner, she was able to move her legs up and down and bend her knees.

"The next patient was a boy who had been unable to walk since birth. Doctors said they could do nothing, because his condition was a solid backbone with a sideways curvature. A qualified masseur in the audience asked and was allowed to watch the boy closely on the platform.

"Mr. Edwards placed his hand on the boy's back. 'It is now yielding,' he whispered. The masseur testified that the backbone was more supple, and, with a little assistance, the boy limped from the platform, while the audience applauded wildly.

"Blindness was the next disease for treatment. A woman took her seat on the platform. She had a cataract in the right eye. Mr. Edwards placed his hand over her eyes and, as he moved it further and further away, she could gradually see the front row of the audience. She was advised to continue treatment at the Balham Healing Centre.

"She was followed by an old man, over eighty years of age, with one glass eye and blindness in the other eye. After treatment



for a few seconds, he described a tulip held in front of his eye as 'flesh colour.' A little while later he could clearly differentiate between a yellow and a red tulip. More treatment was advised.

"Mr. Edwards left the platform to attend to an elderly woman suffering from spinal paralysis for four years after being badly blasted in the Battle of Britain. Placing his hands on her legs and back, Mr. Edwards remained perfectly still. He lifted her up by her hands, and began to pull her towards him. With faltering footsteps at first, she began to walk again, beaming with joy and gratitude.

"He also dealt in similar fashion with people suffering from disseminated sclerosis and other diseases which prevented them from walking. In most cases he advised more treatment. He was loudly applauded when one woman, who had been carried into the hall, was able to move about slowly, radiant with happiness.

"A man, deaf since the age of three because of pneumonia, had his range of hearing increased, and he was promised complete recovery in a matter of months.

"One of the most pathetic of cases was a young girl, aged about seventeen, who was suffering from an inward bend, and had to have her leg encased in irons. Mr. Edwards placed his hands on her back, and moved her body from side to side. When she tried to walk, she found her movements restricted by the irons.

"On the healer's advice she retired and removed the irons. After more treatment on her return, she moved almost gracefully over the stage, carrying with her the irons.

"The last case to be dealt with in public was that of a twelve-year-old boy, with a spinal curvature since birth. His body was lifted backwards and he was able to jump and stamp on the stage, and, assisted by his father, he walked down to his seat."

Now it is the turn of the *Western Telegraph* to tell its readers of the remarkable happening in the district it covers:

"An eight years' old Haverfordwest girl has just spoken her first words since she was nine months old. They were just

'Mam, Mam' uttered once, but they were enough to convince her parents that the child, feared to be incurably dumb, was at the first stage of recovering her speech.

"The child, Elizabeth Margaret Irena Phillips, the eldest of seven children of Mr. and Mrs. Levi H. Phillips, Greenfield Villas, Merlin's Bridge, is receiving what is described as absent healing by Harry Edwards, Spiritualism's most spectacular healer. Through the circle which has been formed in Haverfordwest in recent months, the parents wrote to Mr. Edwards, and the spirit presence was actually experienced in the child's home when the written communication to Harry Edwards was on its way.

"It happened nearly a fortnight ago, and this is how the mother described the experience to a *Telegraph* reporter:

"'Irena was sleeping with me and my husband, and during the night I felt a hand touch my face. I had been fast asleep and awoke a little startled. I asked my husband if he had touched me and he said "No." I then definitely sensed the presence of someone; the child stirred a little, but not much. Next morning to my delight, Irena said twice "Mam, Mam." The words were quite distinct. She has not spoken since, but I have already noticed a big difference. She is brighter, much happier, more contented, and takes more interest in things around her. She used to be a difficult child; she used to show her temper and was restless, but since this experience I have seen little of this.'

"Declaring that she was convinced that the spirit healer was at work, the mother professed with obvious sincerity, 'I have faith and I have patience. I know it will take time, but I believe that some day Irena will speak again and regain her speech for ever. It might take years—it probably will—but I will not despair but await patiently the day which I am sure will come when Irena will speak properly.'

"In the sitting-room is a photograph of Harry Edwards, and as she spoke Mrs. Phillips's gaze was fixed for minutes on end on

the picture of the man in whom she has placed such high faith and confidence.

"The little girl, physically in good condition, has keen eyesight and hearing, and a fine sense of touch. She moves her fingers rapidly about every article she takes up, as if, says the mother, 'she is trying to make music of it.'

"This is not the only case of psychic healing in Pembrokeshire. Among the instances in which intercession has been made and Harry Edwards has operated with success through a spirit guide, are a person suffering from T.B., another with the deadly valvular disease of the heart, and others who had given up hope of being cured through medicine. A considerable number of people especially in the Haverfordwest area, are being drawn towards Spiritualism, and many of them are professing great faith in absent healing. Others, not yet convinced of the claims made for psychic healing, are watching developments closely."

This is followed by the *Surrey Times*, in the healer's own county, which in describing a meeting at Guildford states:

"The audience included qualified doctors and people who had come to the meeting from as far afield as Bristol.

"Mrs. Rose Piggott, wife of Mr. John Piggott, South Street, Guildford, told the *Surrey Times* that in 1904 she suffered with spinal meningitis and was unconscious for eight days and nights. The disease left her with partial deafness and a persistent pain following the slightest exertion which she made.

"On Sunday evening, she received treatment from Mr. Edwards, and as a result testified that on Monday she was enabled to do her washing and other household tasks without pain for the first time since leaving hospital in May, 1905. Also she went to the pictures and was able to hear quite plainly and without effort, which she had been unable to do before.

" 'I feel better today than I have done for some time,' Mr. Frederick Frank Noyce, of Stoke Fields, Guildford, told our reporter on Monday. A martyr to arthritis for two years, Mr.

Noyce also attended the meeting on Sunday and received treatment from the healer.

“Yet another testimonial to the powers of Mr. Edwards comes from a Guildford woman, suffering from partial paralysis, who had previously been unable to bend her knee or to rise from a chair with ease. After treatment, however, these difficulties disappeared and she demonstrated to our representative the remarkable contrast in her walking ‘before’ and ‘after’ receiving treatment.”

## CHAPTER VI

### HEALING BEFORE THE ALTAR

LET us salute a courageous clergyman who was bold enough to make public his testimony to the gift possessed by Edwards. His name is the Rev. C. McDonald-Hobley, who was vicar of a church at Hove, Sussex and who practised healing, aided by a group of parishioners in his church.

When it was announced that Edwards was to visit Brighton, the adjoining parish, and give a demonstration, McDonald-Hobley was anxious to take the chair. The clergyman asked permission of his superior, the Bishop of Chichester, who refused it. The refusal was regarded by the vicar as a challenge and he wanted to resign. He sought my advice and I counselled him against leaving the Church. "You will only be a voice crying in the wilderness," I told him, "and you will be unable to reach any more people than you are doing at present. At least, if you stay in the Church, you can spread this knowledge among those whom we cannot normally reach."

The vicar decided to take my advice. Before he passed on, he made no secret of his knowledge that spirit activity was not confined to Bible days. Edwards's scrapbook contains an article he wrote in his parish magazine deploring the attitude of the Church to spiritual healing. He outlined his own experience in these words:

"It is a thousand pities that the laying-on of hands is not given in every church; so many suffering people in the parish could be helped and even cured by this, for with God nothing is impossible.

"If the clergy do not feel the call to this kind of work, there

are doubtless several lay people who do, and who not only feel the call, but are used by God for the healing of sickness and disease. This last month I had an experience of this very thing.

"I went to Shere to see that well-known spiritual healer, Mr. Harry Edwards. While my friend and I were talking to him in his rather beautiful sanctuary (it was his day off!) a knock came at the door and two ladies entered. The first explained that she would not have intruded, but that she was in such great pain, and the reason was fairly obvious, for a huge goitre hung in front of her neck.

"He at once told her to sit down in front of him and, after a few moments of silent prayer, felt the goitre, which was the size of a large hen's egg. Then he turned to me and said, 'Padre, you can help me in this.'

"I went forward and placed my fingers on it and began to work on it as I do in church—his were either side of mine. The goitre was absolutely hard, but in a few minutes it began to disperse. It felt to me rather like the wind going out of an india-rubber ball, and it soon disappeared altogether. At the conclusion, the skin of the neck just hung rather loosely and the woman was breathing normally and entirely free from pain or discomfort. All this was in full view of my friend and the other lady.

"Now was this from God or not?"

The sequel to this article is that, not long afterwards, Edwards visited the vicar's church and demonstrated his gift in front of the altar, with the clergyman and his band of healers helping him. Here is an account of this remarkable happening, as I described it at the time:

"Spirit healing was given by Harry Edwards, aided by a vicar, in an Anglican church last week. Prophet and priest co-operated, as they did in the early days of Christianity.

"Two days before Whit Sunday, the power of the spirit descended, just as the Bible records its descent on the apostles

on the day of the Pentecost. The scene was the Old Church, Hove, where on alternate Fridays the vicar, the Rev. C. McDonald-Hobley, conducts a guild of healing, 'the sacrament of the laying-on of hands.'

"Assisted by guild members, sufferers waiting in the church's sanctuary walked up the steps to the altar, where Edwards and the vicar waited. They laid their hands on these sick people, who received this benediction of power from another world.

"There were many testimonies to the reality of the spirit healing as patients expressed their gratitude for being able to see and hear a little more, to move locked limbs, and to breathe with greater freedom.

"In one case there was a spontaneous cure. Part of a growth was removed by a few moments' treatment. Edwards said that the rest of it might disperse before the service ended. 'The growth has gone,' the woman told me afterwards.

"For an hour and a half, more than a score of sufferers were treated by the altar. All the time the face of Edwards, wreathed with a confident smile, was transformed. It exuded an other-worldly radiance.

" 'He's one of the present-day saints,' a patient whispered to me after being treated. She was Annie Johnson, one of our old mediums, now suffering from an ailment caused by the blitz. Clairvoyantly she could see two men helping Edwards from the Other Side. Both were famous healers—my old friend Billy Parish and Fred Jones.

"As each sufferer was treated, members of the Guild of Healing stood with outstretched hands, for the healing power to flow through them. In every case there was a demonstration of some relief. Always there came from Edwards the request that the patient should continue to attend the church for further ministrations. Much successful healing has been accomplished in this sanctuary. A leg iron hanging on the wall bore its silent testimony.

"Naturally most of the patients were old, but there was a fair-haired girl in her teens who presented herself with hope in her bright eyes. She was a victim of infantile paralysis. 'This hip is causing trouble,' said the medium. 'The only way to help is to put it right. . . . Give me your hands, vicar.' Together priest and prophet lay their hands on the girl. Next comes a manipulation by Edwards—and the girl has taken one more step on the road to recovery. Then he straightens her deformed hand and fingers.

"See the look of surprise when a woman, whose arm was in a sling, is told, after treatment, to put this arm behind her head. And what is more she does so. She says it's a long time since she has done that.

"'Put your leg on the chair,' another woman is told. She hasn't done so for years, but now she can, because of the spirit power that flowed at the altar. She beams and declares: 'I shall be able to kick a football. This is beautiful.'

"For four years, declares another woman, she has not seen out of her right eye. Thrice she says there is 'no change' after treatment. But the fourth time she exclaims, 'I saw your hand!'

"There is not space to enumerate all the treatments: the goitre that almost vanished; the woman with rheumatoid arthritis who 'goosestepped' back to her seat; the deaf man who heard the healer click his fingernails; the woman whose curved spine was made straight. The vicar called a halt after an hour and a half. He did not want Edwards to be overtaxed.

"Earlier the congregation heard Hopley read: 'Jesus saith to the man with the withered hand, "Stretch forth thine hand." And he stretched it out; and his hand was restored whole as the other.'

"The church at Hove is one of the few where they attempt to follow the injunction attributed to the founder of their religion, 'Heal the sick,' where they attempt some of 'greater things' that were forecast.



“Edwards, before the demonstration, made the point that the healing power used by the disciples was similar to that used by their leader. ‘It was not specially created for them,’ he said. ‘It existed for all time. Healing power is not the prerogative of any one man or any group of people. It is the common heritage of all souls. I hope we may see in this church in Hove, the same manifestation of the spirit, the same working out of the divine law as was seen nearly 2,000 years ago.’

“More than a score of people can testify that this hope became a reality. To them the power of the spirit, or the ‘Holy Spirit,’ as the Bible calls it, is no figure of speech. It is a living force.”

Now we have reached the stage where what was at first a trickle, and then became a stream, broadens into a mighty river. I have outlined the beginnings of the Harry Edwards healing ministry, starting in obscurity in a London suburb. I have shown how, because successes were achieved, the ministry grew and extended all over the British Isles. Now I record the first national publicity accorded to this healer.

Credit for seeing that the healing was what journalists call “a good story” must be given to *Illustrated*, the popular weekly journal. Somehow or other, the news had reached the editor of this publication of the remarkable work being done by Edwards. He sent a photographer and a reporter to the healing demonstration at Tooting to which I have referred. This led to some of the finest early pictures of the public healing.

*Illustrated* gave a whole page to a striking photograph of Edwards holding a bright pink tulip in front of the eighty-year-old patient, who had one glass eye and the other was practically useless. Yet after a few minutes’ treatment, the man was able to describe the flower as being flesh coloured.

Other pictures showed a girl suffering from infantile paralysis discarding a leg iron, and walking for the first time, a boy being

cured of curvature of the spine, and a section of the audience watching with fascination the results of the healing.

The pictures were accompanied by a graphic account which was headlined, "The Hands of Harry Edwards." As the reporter witnessed these events with fresh eyes, because it was her first attendance at a healing demonstration, I think it worth quoting from her account:

"From Kennington and Kensington, from Pimlico and Plumstead, from Earl's Court and Ealing, the sick and the lame, the deaf and the blind made their way to the large Co-operative Hall in the busy South London suburb of Tooting.

"At the door of the hall, members of the local Spiritualist society were assisting the helpless to their seats. A young father carried his son, stricken with paralysis, down the long aisle, making sure they would be well in the foreground. Men and women on crutches found vacant chairs, while behind them came the tapping of a stick belonging to an old, white-haired blind man.

"A path was cleared as a young man wheeled in his father sitting upright in a bathchair. Wearing neatly tailored brown slacks to camouflage the iron on her leg, a girl with merry eyes and long blonde hair walked into the hall with her mother.

"There was a hush as the crowd—now five hundred strong—waited for fifty-three years' old Harry Edwards to appear. Then, after a short service of hymns and a prayer, conducted by the Balham Spiritualists, Harry Edwards, a quiet unassuming man in a navy blue suit, stepped forward.

"He called for patients. An arthritic case was the first. With the aid of a stout walking stick, a bespectacled, middle-aged woman struggled up the few steps on to the stage and sank into a chair. With little ceremony, Edwards began massaging her knee joints for a few seconds. He then made her bend and straighten her legs several times—a thing, it was said, she had not been able to do for years.

"Pulling the woman to her feet, Edwards then walked her up and down the stage goose-step style until, worn out with the strain, the woman collapsed fainting, into a chair. After being revived, she walked off the stage, without her stick, accompanied by a wild burst of clapping and cheering from the audience.

"Next a tall, lanky youth in his twenties, who had been deaf from the age of three, clambered on to the platform with his deaf-aid apparatus under one arm. Edwards, first placing his hands over the boy's eyes, then over his ears, walked a few feet, talking quietly. 'Sunday night,' said Edwards. 'Sunday night,' repeated the boy. 'Can you still hear me?' said Edwards, retreating a few more steps. A puzzled frown appeared on the boy's face as he tried to catch the words.

"The men and women on the platform, all ardent Spiritualists, leaned forward. Two elderly women sat with their hands held out, believing that some power would flow from them to Edwards to assist him further.

"Harry Edwards walked back to the deaf boy and once again placed his hands over his ears, asking his spirit guides to help him. He then moved away and spoke. This time the boy seemed to hear distinctly and repeated Edwards's remarks.

"Next to receive attention was a woman who, through spinal paralysis, had lost the use of her legs. Edwards, pressing her close to him, massaged her back and legs. 'Forget your legs and persevere,' Edwards asked her. The woman shook her head and Edwards eventually left her, telling her to return for further treatment.

"A little boy, suffering from a curvature of the spine, clung tightly to Edwards as he felt for the bones which were out of place. Soon smiling, the boy started walking alone, but still his feet sprawled in all directions. 'It's only a matter of time,' Edwards explained to the boy's father, 'before he gets used to walking properly.'

"And so, one by one, the deaf and the blind and the paralytic came up for the 'laying on' of hands. In a quiet voice, Edwards talked, sometimes persuading, sometimes cajoling, joking or teasing. After three hours he called a halt.

"When the audience stood up for the last hymn, Edwards, alone, sat with eyes closed and hands tightly clasped. The meeting was over, but he was not allowed to go. Young men and girls rushed to him, some who had been treated wanting to find out when they could see him again; many others asking for advice concerning their ailments and disablements."

As many articles which appear in our national magazines are syndicated, it was no surprise to find that this account and many of the pictures appeared in publications overseas. Thus, the news of the healing successes were beginning to reach the far corners of the earth.

The publication by *Illustrated* of these pictures and its account produced a spate of letters from readers. Those who had personal experience expressed gratification in seeing a magazine with such a large circulation devoting space to the subject, but, of course, there were sceptics. The editor decided to print both points of view. Here is a selection:

"I have been cured by the great healer, Harry Edwards. Previously three doctors had treated me and I underwent an operation without any success. My cure certainly took a few months, but it was conducted entirely through absent healing by exchange of letters. My faith and belief in spirit healing is unshakable.—Mrs. Brenda J. Bambridge, 11 Greytiles, Queens Road, Teddington, Middlesex."

"I was very interested in your pictures of Harry Edwards, the spirit healer. Fifteen years ago, my boy of four was a weakling who had been in hospital for heart trouble. He got worse until he had to be pushed round in a pram. Eventually I took him to a spirit healer who was doing good work at the time. He received one treatment only, but he soon got strong enough to walk

about by himself. Today he is enjoying life in the Navy.—Mrs. E. A. Miles, 82, Longfield Street, Southfields, London, S.W.18.”

“Thank you for giving us Spiritualists space in your paper. Even in these enlightened days we still suffer persecution from some sources. It is inconceivable to me that such ‘miracles’ as Harry Edwards performs can be ridiculed. Did not Christ say, ‘Greater things than these shall ye also do’?—Phyllis M. White, Hon. Secretary, Edmonton Spiritualist National Church, 130, Croyland Road, London, N.9.”

“I shudder that Harry Edwards should be allowed to manipulate Martin Kaye’s back. Surely the only person who can really help to cure the boy’s curvature of the spine is a qualified surgeon. I had the same start in life as Martin. My advice to his parents is, if the surgeons cannot help him, leave well alone. Time and nature, even if they will not straighten the bones, will bring contentment of mind and body.—E. B., Bradford, Yorks.”

About this time, it occurred to me that no one had asked Edwards to describe his own sensations while he was healing the sick. I thought this would be an added contribution and asked him to contribute an article covering this viewpoint. The result was this very interesting and human account:

“Before the service begins, I am perhaps the least affected person present. I experience no tension or apprehension, and my mind is quite free as to what may or may not take place. Experience has taught me that healings take place simply and without the employment of any technique on my part. This knowledge, plus my supreme confidence in the spirit doctors to overcome any ill condition within the confines of the natural law, helps me to avoid any concern or nervousness.

“My first responsibility occurs shortly after I go on the platform. Then I quietly seek to attune with the spirit realm. After daily practice, often for most hours of the day, this tuning in comes as second nature. To others *and to myself* I may seem normal; but I often receive evidence that my normality has taken

on a supersensitivity. Here are two examples. I was waiting to start healing and my attention was focused on a cripple in a bathchair, when I 'heard' a voice say, 'That one!'

"The voice was so loud—almost a shout—that it made me start, and I looked round to see who was disturbing the meeting. No one appeared upset, and I realised it was a clairaudient message.

"Before going to the Victoria Hall in May, I found that my body and legs were aching severely as a result of playing badminton rather strenuously. On going up some stairs before the meeting, I felt these aches so strongly that I went up with a laboured effort. I said to myself, 'What a state to be in before a service.' Yet during the service I found myself moving about alertly and completely free from any stress at all, nor did the aches return. Simple things like these give confidence and make me know that a condition of supersensitivity is present, though outwardly I may seem to be, and feel, normal.

"From the time of attunement, the meeting itself does not worry me, whether it be a large gathering or a small one. I am possessed only with the desire to help and heal. As soon as the first hymn begins, I look at the audience to see how many crippled people are present, that is, those who cannot stand up, and make mental notes for healing to be given to them.

"No pre-arrangement is ever made for healing to be given to any particular sufferer. This not only avoids any question of collusion, but leaves my mind free until the actual moment of healing arrives.

"While I ignore any mental limitation of the good that can be done, sometimes I meet physical disharmonies that may be outside the possibility of recovery under natural law. The term natural law is used in its widest sense, incorporating both physical and metaphysical laws. Examples of these limitations are cases where limbs are so perished through long disuse that they cannot support the weight of the body, or where surgical operations

have removed bones or altered artificially the structure of the body to such an extent that a return of normal functioning is not possible.

"For the actual healing I try to cover as wide a range of diseases as possible, and this often means that only two or three of each class of disease can be accepted. From among the applicants the most severe cases are chosen. It must be remembered that the purpose of the service is a demonstration of spirit healing power and therefore the more chronic the condition the greater is the change seen after the healing.

"The choosing of the severest cases gives me no mental concern. I know that anything can happen. The preliminary thought directive possessing my consciousness from the moment the patient is contacted is, 'How is he to be healed?'

"As the patient is assisted towards the platform I receive an inward diagnosis as to where the cause of the trouble is and where the healing power is to be applied. Thus, if a patient has leg trouble, I know whether the cause lies in the leg itself, or in the spine or head where the affected nerve centre is. I am then conscious only of the directive effort to remove the cause. If the cause be in the spine, the sensitivity in the fingers soon discovers it. It may be a bone out of place or even a curvature paralysing the leg nerves, or it may be a spastic condition of the spine producing a similar result.

"The diagnosis made, the moments of healing begin. As soon as the fingers centre on the seat of the trouble, the healing force flows through. If it is a curvature, the backbone is gently moved like links in a chain, and the vertebræ slip back into place. If it is a spastic condition, the fingers centre on the vertebræ and, with gentle movement of the patient, the backbone becomes flexible.

"No force is ever needed. No physical force can heal. No pain is caused. This has only happened once and that was quickly removed. As soon as the healing has taken place, I feel within myself a sense of happiness that the work has been done.

At first I had to learn to trust this inward knowledge, for sometimes I could not bring myself to believe the end had been achieved. I can then tell the patient to get up and walk, or do this or that. Sometimes the long duration of the complaint has locked the joints or rendered the muscles weak. Supplementary healing is then given, following the same general procedure of allowing the healing forces to unlock the joints or strengthen the muscles. The actual healing may take only a flash of time.

"I am always conscious of the help given by my helpers and from other sensitives present. They seem to provide a reservoir of strength (not qualitative healing power), but general strength upon which I can freely draw.

"Apart from purely physical reactions, due to the heat of the hall or my own movements, I do not feel any other fatigue, in fact, I often feel fresher after a service than before. There comes a sensing of exquisite pleasure, of sheer delight, greater than any physical exultation, as the healings go on. Yet at the end of the session, there is a sense of sadness that so many are left untreated.

"An example of how I have to avoid mind limitation as to what can be done was when a patient came suffering from blindness. I looked at the eyes and saw they were disintegrated—no iris, no pupil, only a smeary mass of streaks. My mind could not help the thought, 'not possible.' Then I recovered my inner confidence. In a few moments, those eyes, blind from birth, could see shades of light. Before I left the hall, I was told they could see colour. Today these eyes, not yet clear, can see telegraph poles passing from a carriage window. This patient is receiving weekly healing at the Marylebone Spiritualist Association and from me monthly. Thus one finds that even when the cause of disease has been removed, further healing is desirable. I always make the point that this can be given as well at local churches as through me.

"There are occasions when I am startled by the rapidity of the healing. The cause is found. I prepare to give healing, when, to



my astonishment, I find the healing has taken place before I consciously co-operate. This has happened in restoring senses, locked joints, curvatures, etc.

"The lessons I have learned may be summarised as follows:

"Supreme faith in the spirit doctors.

"Avoid *all* personal techniques.

"Keep the mind free from personal ideas.

"Healing is a simple act, as simple as a finger beckoning.

"Appeal to, or attune with, the spirit realm rather than to one spirit personality, and then *know* that all that can be done *will be done*."

This article should be taken in conjunction with another account, contributed by Edwards at my invitation, which was headed, "HEALING THE BODY IS NOT ENOUGH," and was published by me. Edwards put forward these points of view:

"In the past, it was rightly considered that the highest ideal a medium could attain was the gift of healing physical disease. That this is not sufficient has been stressed by the guides, by emphasis being laid on the need for the healing of the soul or spirit self as a vital factor in the complete healing of a sufferer.

"Many diseases have their origin in the disharmony of the soul, and therefore the healing has first to be done in the soul and is then reflected in the physical body. Thus we are now consciously adding to our service, as healers, by accepting higher spiritual responsibilities. True, these responsibilities have always been present and known in an abstract way. They have been part of our work all the time, but the conscious knowledge of how this can be done is now becoming more clear.

"The wise one will always seek evidence and factual support of every claim that is put forward. This also applies as to how we can be instruments for the healing of souls. There are pitfalls to be avoided. In the effort to obtain 'understanding' we must, at all costs, avoid fatuous egotism or accept theories until they are proved. Even statements by guides must stand this test. We must

avoid all forms of ritual or think it is done by broadcasting 'God bless you.'

"Disharmony of the soul is seen in ignoble habits, perverse conduct, misery of the inner self, melancholia, irritability, anger, selfishness, drug habits, drunkenness, and in those who cause domestic suffering in unfortunately many ways. We have already often seen, after spirit aid has been asked, the changing of bad conduct, restoration of domestic harmony and the overcoming of melancholia, life-taking tendencies, and in general happiness and body health restored.

"A sense of 'inner happiness' invariably accompanies spiritual healing, which is, in effect, happiness within the spirit self—and this indicates the healing of the soul. True progression is the ennobling of character and when this is seen to take place, as the direct result of spirit healing, it provides *prima facie* evidence that soul-healing is a real and practical service we can render to our fellows. One cannot become spiritually healthy by shutting oneself away from the world, away from the sordidness and suffering. One has to know of these things to be able to appreciate the opposite. There are more 'angels' in the slums than in Mayfair.

"Let us get down to basic things. No human instrument of the spirit can heal the soul of another. No spirit guide, of himself, can heal the soul of another. Every one has the privilege of free will and self-determination. What can be done is to influence another person's inner self (or spirit mind or soul) for good. This is well within the province of the spirit healing guides who are able to influence the spirit self of a sufferer, just as we are able to influence the normal consciousness by speech or writing.

"Thus while we influence the inner self through the normal mind, the spirit people influence first through the spirit mind. This is important, for many sufferers can be helped in spite of themselves—the many who would pay no heed to the spoken word. The spirit mind and the normal conscious mind are closely

and intimately allied, so that one can reflect on the other. We can understand this more easily when we talk about our actions being altered by 'our conscience.'

"Let us take an imaginary case. A man is guilty of harmful acts causing distress to his wife and disharmony in his home. This is an illness of his soul, building up his 'karmic debt.' The wife or friend asks a healer to intercede in the case. The healer in his intercession presents the case to his spirit healers. They receive it and then exert what influences they can (by thought or other means) to the man to readjust his way of life. In their own way and at the right time, they reawaken his conscience and if the man is perceptive the change of habit will follow. It must be remembered that the healing of a soul is the final responsibility of the man himself. It cannot be compelled, ordered or forced.

"The writer has seen the regeneration of men and women suffering from soul disharmonies on many occasions, and that is surely the healing of the soul. This has invariably taken place through absent healing. In dealing with all ill-phases of the mind or nerves, absent healing is obviously the best method.

"Much of our physical distress is the product of mind and nerve trouble. I think I am right in saying that the bulk of our human ills are closely linked with mind and nerve stress. Both are intimately related. I have proved that many diseases are the direct result of such disharmony. As calmness and balance are restored to the mind and nerve centres, so the healing of seeming physical disease is overcome.

"As we appreciate how closely allied is the spirit mind to the normal consciousness so do we see how the healing of the soul becomes part of practical psychic science. And as we become aware of the implications behind this form of healing we can only be but dimly aware of the infinite scope that lies within these healing powers for the progression of all souls in all ways.

"Thus we are not only instruments of the spirit for life in this plane of existence, but, by helping to accomplish work now that

hitherto could only be done on the spirit side of life, instruments for the spirit realm also."

Now it is the turn of Egypt to hear the news about the healing ministry. The scrapbook contains a whole page of extracts from an article in Arabic which appeared in an Egyptian publication. This was largely composed of extracts from accounts that appeared in England, but it was one more indication of how the news was spreading. Immediately this account appeared there was the inevitable result—another batch of letters addressed to Edwards from sufferers in Egypt who turned to him as a last resort.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE GOOD NEWS SPREADS

THE *Yorkshire Post* is one of the most respected newspapers in this country. When Edwards visited Leeds and demonstrated his gift before a thousand people this was news. The very solid *Yorkshire Post* prefaced its account with these careful words:

"The following report is from an experienced member of the staff of the *Yorkshire Post*. We believe it to be an accurate description of what the reporter saw, but some of the statements concerning patients must rest upon the authority of the patients themselves, pending further investigation."

This is the reporter's story:

"Over a thousand people saw a remarkable healing demonstration at Belgrave Central Hall, Leeds. Patients, many of them in wheeled chairs, came from all over Yorkshire and parts of Lancashire. The healer was Mr. Harry Edwards.

"What were reported to be chronic cases of rheumatoid arthritis, forms of paralysis and curvature of the spine were among the healer's most successful cases at the Leeds meeting. There were gasps of astonishment, smiles and tears, as crooked bodies were seen to straighten, joints were unlocked and useless limbs made supple. Sticks were discarded. Men and women walked down the steep steps from the platform and performed other actions which they said they had not been able to do for years.

"Mr. Edwards, who spoke quietly and smiled in an encouraging way, began by encircling the patients with his arms and rocking them slightly from side to side, backwards and forwards

Then he gently manipulated the affected parts, pointing out, as he worked, that no force was used and there was no pain. He and his assistant, who did little beyond place a hand on the forehead, worked most of the time with eyes closed.

"Among those who claimed to receive benefit was Mrs. Nellie Walker, of Osmondthorpe Lane, Leeds, who, suffering from what was reported to be rheumatoid arthritis, could not lift either arm and was assisted on to the platform wearing an iron on her leg, the bone of which was said at the hospital she attended to be decayed. After treatment she was able to remove the iron for herself and, after walking without it, was able to stoop and pick up the appliance from the floor. 'I cannot remember doing that before,' she said trembling with excitement.

"Mrs. Mary E. Brayshaw, of 2, Grange Terrace, Yeadon, a sufferer from what was described as disseminated sclerosis, who had lost all feeling in both legs, told me, as she came off the platform: 'I feel absolutely free, now. Before they stuck pins into me without any reaction. I could have walked on nails. Now I can feel your hand through my stocking.' Mrs. Brayshaw was said to have been discharged from a Leeds hospital as incurable four years ago.

" 'How long have you been like that?' the healer asked a man with acute curvature of the spine, malformed chest and one shoulder inches higher than the other. 'All my life!' replied Mr. George Procter, of Gladstone Street, Normanton.

"After several minutes' work on the spine, the healer bid him straighten up. He stood up straight, his face radiant. He threw out his chest and beat his hands on it to demonstrate the change. When he replaced his jacket, tailored to allow for his deformity, the material sagged where the curvature had been. He is a plumber by trade, but told me, as he rushed to catch a bus home, that he had not worked for four years.

"Mrs. Rigby, of Ashton Drive, Lancaster, crippled with what was said to be rheumatoid arthritis, returned to her wheeled chair

feeling that some of her joints had been unlocked, but more remained to be done.

"The demonstration continued for an hour and a half, and well over a score of patients received attention, including cases of defective sight and hearing, in which the cure was said to be gradual.

"Mrs. Nellie Walker had the iron on her leg when seen by a *Yorkshire Post* reporter last night, but she said: 'I shall persist with his healing, I slept beautifully last night. You can feel the power in Mr. Edwards. He is a fine man, and I shall correspond with him.' Saturday's experience has convinced her that there is hope of her being able to dispense with the leg-iron."

That does not end the newspaper interest in the proceedings, for the following day there was another account, of equal length, written by its London correspondent, who was sent to interview Edwards. Among the statements printed by the newspaper as a result of the interview are these:

"About three thousand letters a week come to Mr. Edwards from all parts of the world. He sees about forty patients a day. Before our conversation today, he had seen thirty-five people. Among them was a thirty-year-old man with serious lateral curvature of the spine. Mr. Edwards claimed to have brought his spine back to almost normal.

"'One of the most striking cases among the thousands in which I have been successful,' said Mr. Edwards, 'was that of a sixteen-year-old girl, blind from birth. Within a few minutes of the beginning of the treatment she started to see. Though her eyes still look abnormal, she is now gradually gaining reasonable sight. I treat her once a month.'

"According to Mr. Edwards, doctors have attested many of his cures. 'When treating a growth, I can feel it dissolving under my fingers,' he said. 'But the sensation is quite different when I am healing blindness—the force seems to have a different character.'"

The newspaper's interest did not even end there, for it sent reporters to interview patients who had been treated by the healer to see what progress they had made. The result was the following:

"Interviews with some of the people treated by Mr. Edwards showed that generally improvement had been maintained, one case reporting a remarkable development.

"Mrs. Amy Slater, of Belmont Grove, Rawdon, who came off the platform weeping with happiness because she could move her feet again, showed a *Yorkshire Post* reporter last night that she could now open and close her hands. 'For four years I haven't been able to shut my hand,' she said. 'I could not hold anything. Since Saturday night my hands and my shoulders, which were very stiff when I left the hall, have got steadily better.' Mrs. Slater states that she has had rheumatoid arthritis for seven years, getting progressively worse, and that she was told at the Infirmary, where she attended as an out-patient, that nothing more could be done for her.

"Mrs. Mary E. Brayshaw, of Grange Crescent, Yeadon, claimed that Mr. Edwards's treatment had considerably improved her legs. She was convinced that she would be completely cured.

" 'I can't say I feel any better,' said Mrs. C. A. Hill, whose home is in Bradford Road, Stanningley. Mrs. Hill, whose illness was diagnosed sixteen years ago by one of the leading neurologists in the world as disseminated sclerosis, cannot walk unaided. She was carried on and off the platform by her husband who was advised to continue treatment on her backbone begun by Mr. Edwards. The Hills had no previous experience of psychic healing and were persuaded to attend the meeting by friends. Mrs. Hill is keeping an open mind about it. The unlocking of her elbow joint, she suggests, could have been the result of other treatment.

"Mr. George Proctor, of Gladstone Street, Normanton, a



sufferer from acute curvature of the spine, said: 'It was wonderful. I shall never forget Mr. Edwards. During the audience with him I seemed to be in a different world. My back has straightened tremendously, and the bone protruding from my chest has receded. There is no longer the neck pain caused by one shoulder falling inches lower than the other.' His wife, who was overjoyed at the improved condition of her husband, confirmed his claims."

It is worth mentioning that the *Yorkshire Post* was so inundated with requests from readers for the address of Harry Edwards that it responded by printing it a few days later.

The scene changes to Kilmarnock, in Scotland, where the local *Standard* gives an advance notice of a demonstration by saying: "A very remarkable man is visiting Kilmarnock tomorrow evening, and bus-loads of people are coming to see him from places as far distant as Dundee, Edinburgh, Greenock and Dumfries." The newspaper adds that every ticket for seats in the large hall had been allocated. Not unmindful of the bodily comforts of the audience, the newspaper's final words are that "special arrangements had to be made for catering for the hundreds of visitors."

In its following issue, the *Kilmarnock Standard* published this enthusiastic description of what it called an "extraordinary meeting":

"To Kilmarnock last Sunday there came lame and crippled people from all parts of Scotland that they might be touched by the hands of Mr. Harry Edwards. Long before the service began, the Grand Hall was full in every part. In the audience were hundreds of people from distant places. Special buses had brought them from Dundee, Dunfermline, Rosyth, Portobello, Edinburgh, Perth, Greenock and Dumfries. The car-park was crowded with cars from a' the airts.

"Without venturing to comment on the events that took place, we shall try to describe them as we and the other members

of the great congregation saw them. Mr. Edwards is white-haired, fresh-coloured, with finely moulded features and an expression of gentleness and kindness. His smile is heart-warming.

"Mr. Edwards called for volunteer patients; for the public demonstration he said he would take only two or three specimens of different diseases; the others he would treat at the close of the service. In all parts of the hall hands were raised and cries were made by would-be volunteers or their accompanying friends. Below the platform and on both sides of the hall were many spinal carriages and wheeled chairs containing cripples, but it was only when the call for volunteers was made that one realised that a great proportion of the audience consisted of crippled people—some on crutches, some with stout sticks, many wearing leg-irons.

"Among the first cases were several men and women with curvature of the spine. An Ayrshire doctor who was present came forward at Mr. Edwards's request and after examination pronounced there was curvature. Mr. Edwards placed an arm round the patient and held his hand on the affected part; the patient's hands were round his neck. He held the patient to him and made a gentle rocking motion from side to side. No great force appeared to be used. The contact lasted only a minute or so. The doctor again examined the patient's spine and was understood to say that the curvature had disappeared.

"So it was too with another patient. In a third case, the doctor said he was unable to state definitely that the curvature had gone. Several cases were of men and women with arthritis, and the joints of whose arms and legs were locked. Mr. Edwards made contact with them; he stroked the affected arms and wrists firmly but with no display of force. The elbow and wrist joints were unlocked and the limb became flexible; fingers which were tightly clenched were unloosed.

"One woman, whose arm was rigid, moved it freely. At Mr.

Edwards's request, and after one or two tries, she raised her arm and placed her hand behind her neck, then on her head, then on Mr. Edwards's head. 'How long is it since you were able to raise your arm before?' he asked. 'Sixteen years,' the patient replied.

"There were people who walked on to the platform on crutches or leaning heavily on sticks. Mr. Edwards encircled them with his arm, gently massaged the leg, then taking them by the hands asked them to walk. Some said they had not walked unaided for years. 'You can walk now if you try,' said Mr. Edwards. And they walked—haltingly and awkwardly at first, but more freely as they gained confidence. They walked off the platform to their places in the hall without crutches or sticks, one without the leg-iron that he had been wearing.

"One youngish man was carried on the platform on the shoulder of another; he was unable to stand without support. His face was wreathed in smiles as eventually he walked off the platform unaided. Later he was seen moving about the hall. 'Don't overdo it,' Mr. Edwards called to him. 'Walk a bit every day, but don't start with five-mile walks.' An hour or two later that man and other cripples who had been treated were observed walking out of the hall and across the roadway to their buses—walking somewhat as a little child does who is learning to walk, concentrating on every step; but they were walking.

"A young woman from Macduff had both legs in irons and used two crutches. She had never in her life walked or stood unaided, she said. After some minutes of treatment, with some assistance from Mr. Edwards and his assistant the young woman rose from her chair and rather fearfully stood upright. Several times she rose and sat down in the chair, bearing most of her weight on her own legs. She seemed amazed, almost incredulous. 'It will be a struggle,' said Mr. Edwards, 'but you will be helped. We shall try to help you.'

"In the space of less than an hour and a half, Mr. Edwards

treated about a score of patients. There was no perceptible change in the condition of some of them; others, as has been said, were using arms and legs which they declared they had not been able to use for years. In most cases their disability was apparent. In these cases where movement was restored, the audience applauded vigorously; once almost the entire audience rose to its feet and cheered a man, who had to be assisted on to the platform, as he walked unaided to his place in the hall. A few of the patients were in tears as they left the platform; most were excitedly happy.

"But the strangest part of this strange meeting occurred after the service proper had ended with the singing of the hymn, 'Praise, my soul, the King of heaven.' It was announced that Mr. Edwards would treat patients who remained behind. About half of the people in the hall remained, great numbers of them suffering from crippling diseases.

"When Mr. Edwards moved down to the floor of the hall, they crowded around him, pressed in on him. He went quietly on with his work of 'laying on of hands' and gentle manipulation. In the press of people were many cripples in wheeled chairs, and even a baby in its cot; friends accompanying the invalids did their best to attract the healer's attention. As Mr. Edwards moved around the crowd followed him, pressing in ever more closely. The spectacle of so many suffering people—their pathetic eagerness to have one touch of the hands of the healer—was a strangely moving one.

"From the platform appeals were made to the people to be seated and promises made that Mr. Edwards would attend to all who needed his help. Something like order was restored. Many of the people resumed their seats, but soon queues began to form. There was a line of wheeled carriages and spinal chairs, and running parallel with it two other rows of sufferers and their friends. Mr. Edwards attended to all, his 'treatment' being the same as he had given to those who appeared on the platform.

Many of the people were obviously happier after they had had his attention. They smiled and talked excitedly to their friends. To many he gave instructions. 'Warmth, massage and movement,' he was heard to tell one patient; and he frequently told patients they would require more help and they would get it from the Spiritualist church.

"When the *Standard* representative left the Grand Hall at nine o'clock, Mr. Edwards had been treating patients for two and a half hours and he was still hard at work and there were many more waiting his attention."

About this time I was asked by the Editor of *Cavalcade* to write two articles on Edwards. I began the first by describing what I had witnessed in Manchester recently:

"The two thousand people who filled a Manchester chapel the other night broke into applause as they witnessed healing wonders, 'incurables' successfully treated by a power flowing through one man.

" 'The hand of God is behind this,' was the public testimony given by the minister in charge of the meeting. For an hour and a half, at the first service held in the chapel since it was blitzed, the audience watched the spectacle of sufferers who had lived in the valley of despair being healed.

"The first success was a woman victim of arthritis for thirty years, who proudly walked back unaided to her seat. She refused to use her stick or lean on anybody's arm—she even motioned Edwards away.

"One of the many nurses present volunteered, 'I have never seen anything like it,' when she helped with the treatment to a child suffering from paralysis. He had never walked by himself. Soon he was able to jump from a chair and to crawl away merely by holding the healer's hand!

"The nurse traced the curve in another young patient's spine and, after a few seconds' treatment by Edwards, announced that the 'impossible' had happened—the spine was straight.

"So it went on, always with cases where doctors had used the word 'hopeless,' where hospitals could do no more. At the end, after treating these demonstration cases, all other sufferers in the hall were invited to receive short personal healing. This was an impressive scene. They formed a long queue, stretching from the rail, on which Edwards sat, in front of the rostrum, to the back of the chapel. For a few seconds he laid his hands on each sufferer."

The Editor was so interested by this article that he asked me to write another to explain how the psychic healing was accomplished. Here it is:

"The successes achieved by psychic healing are based on the fact that man is more than a physical body, that he has a mind and a soul. And unlike the orthodox doctor, the psychic healer deals with *causes* and not with the *effects* of diseases.

"Psychic healing is a form of mediumship. The healer is born with a natural gift which he has developed. There have been natural healers throughout the centuries. God has endowed some individuals with the gift of healing, just as He has endowed musicians, poets, artists and singers. These natural healers have only to be in the presence of sufferers and the healing power they radiate brings relief.

"The gift of healing cannot be conferred in theological or medical colleges. Some doctors possess it; many do not. Occasionally, like the famous J. M. Hickson, and his successor, the Rev. John Maillard, the healer has been attached to the Church; usually he is a free lance. When the Salvation Army was in difficulty regarding its leadership some years after the passing of its founder, General Booth, somebody explained the problem by saying, 'God chose the first General, but man chose the second.' The psychic healer is a chosen instrument.

"According to the Bible the 'power of the spirit' descended in Palestine two thousand years ago and enabled its chosen vessels

to heal the sick. That power is still at work today. The 'miracles' wrought by psychic healers are due to this power streaming through them. The healers have made themselves accessible to spiritual laws, which are part of the natural laws, but their operation is understood only by a comparative few.

"Man possesses here and now a spirit body through which he functions after death. There is a very close relationship between his physical and spiritual bodies. Paul is most illuminating on this subject in Chapter Fifteen of his Epistle to the Corinthians. Man's two bodies are constantly reacting on each other. The physical body is dependent on its spirit counterpart for its existence. The spirit body is dependent on its physical counterpart for its experiences in the material world. Each is vitally affected by what happens to the other.

"There are two prime causes of disease. One is purely physical—broken bones, burns and other accidents come within this category. The other cause is spiritual or mental. There are more diseases, illnesses and physical suffering due to the second category than the world generally recognises.

"Though the spirit body is affected temporarily by illness, and sometimes causes it, there is no real disease in this body. The defect lies in its adjustment with the physical body. We know how anger affects the spleen, jealousy the liver, and how shocks cause hair to turn white. If you accept the New Testament account, Jesus healed one man by telling him that his sins were forgiven, indicating that in his case the disease originated in his mind.

"Psychic healing, either by direct or absent treatment, transfers vital energy which stimulates into activity the life-giving force within the patient. A famous healer once said that disease results from an interference with, or restriction of, the spiritual forces circulating in the body. Anything that affects the flow of these forces causes disease, which manifests according to local conditions. Spirit healing is directed to supplying the necessary

power for stimulating within the sufferer that energy which will inspire the affected parts with positive health.

"Not only does life continue after death, but there is progress in the Beyond. There is evidence to show that many doctors, surgeons and healers who passed to the higher life are interested in helping suffering humanity. Whatever qualities made them great on earth they have developed Over There, and they are greater beings as a result. After years of experimenting and research they have discovered how to transmit vital 'rays,' dynamic, recuperative, energising and life-giving in their nature, which drive away disease. The quality and quantity that can be transmitted are conditioned by the healing medium, by his mental and physical fitness, by the stage of spiritual evolution he has reached.

"The recent discoveries concerning atomic energy enable us to understand how psychic healing is achieved. The scientist resolves matter into its atomic formation. The spirit guide transforms subtle etheric vibrations into modes of manifestation that can be recognised by our five senses. It is all a question of change of vibration or frequency.

"Harry Edwards rightly points out: 'When a nerve is inflamed, when tissue is diseased, or when there is any form of physical disharmony, there is a condition of atomic vibration causing trouble. When healing takes place, a set of correcting vibratory forces is applied to the given condition to effect the change necessary to restore perfect balance.' As an example, he says that a growth can be dispersed by breaking up its atomic formation.

"In absent healing the spirit power has to traverse oceans and continents to find its recipient. But is that any more remarkable than radio or radar, wonders to which we have become accustomed?

"Absent healing is usually directed to the spirit body of the patient while he sleeps. Edwards 'tunes in' to the sufferer and frequently visits him by means of spirit travelling, or astral pro-



jection, as it has been called. Edwards has given detailed descriptions of the rooms where patients were sleeping. And many sufferers have testified to waking and seeing the spirit form of the healer or his guides ministering to them.

"Psychic healing seldom gets a fair chance. The sufferer does not usually seek its aid until he has exhausted all other possibilities. The successes, therefore, are all the more remarkable. These demonstrate that man has access to a higher tribunal, that he has a second chance."

Another sequel to the demonstration in this Manchester chapel was that, somehow or other, the *Sunday Dispatch* heard about it and published a news story in these words:

"When Mrs. Mary Beckett, of Birch Avenue, Alkrington, Middleton, near Manchester, carried her eight-year-old son, Victor, into a Manchester church he was a cripple with spastic paralysis. He had been helpless since birth, under treatment from nine months old, and had never walked. Before the end of the service he walked out, lightly holding his mother's hand. The child was laughing. The mother wept.

"Psychic healer Harry Edwards, demonstrating before a crowd of two thousand that included two doctors and a score of St. John Ambulance nurses, cured him on the public platform, while crowds cheered emotionally and a Congregational minister sat with his fingertips joined in prayer. White-haired, in a blue suit and open-necked white shirt, Mr. Edwards sat in his chair while the crowd, including scores of cripples in wheel-chairs and clutching crutches, who were huddled as close as they could get to the platform, sang hymns.

"Then, one by one, a dozen of them were helped up the church aisle. Mr. William H. Parks, of Norwood Road, Stretford, limped up painfully with a stick. In a few moments of quiet encouragement he was walking unaided. Attractive Mrs. Linda Plymouth, of Rusholme Road Sharston, helpless for thirteen years with disseminated sclerosis, came down the platform

unaided. 'The first time for years that I have walked without a stick or somebody to support me,' she said.

"While fog crept into the church, Mr. Edwards, in quiet cultured tones, said: 'What I have been doing is to show you that spiritual healing can help cripples. These actual moments of healing have been fragmentary. They will need further months of treatment.'

"Crowds had come from all parts of Northern England and Ireland. They saw pretty, twenty-year-old Margaret Lucas, infantile paralysis cripple, helped on to the platform by her mother. 'She has been paralysed for nineteen years, only able to crawl on her knees,' her mother told me. Margaret ended up by jumping from a chair, skipping shakily on her toes, and walking unaided to her seat."

As you see, the healing was now beginning to penetrate the national Press. Another indication was the appearance in *Reynolds News* of an account of a blind boy who was being healed. Said this newspaper:

"Blind from birth, Bernard Gifford, boy harmonica wizard, who is now learning to play the accordion, is being compared with some of London's best entertainers. Bernard had a successful B.B.C. audition when he was thirteen. He will broadcast again shortly before Christmas. When on holiday from school, he entertains youngsters at Gaumont British Saturday morning cinema shows.

"Bernard is a student at the Royal London Society training school for the blind at Aylesbury. At his home, his mother said that she is sceptical of spiritual healing, but admitted that, after two visits to a healer at Shere there is a small improvement in Bernard's sight."

A few weeks later Bernard Gifford broadcast a selection of popular airs on his accordion. By then, he had made such good progress in his recovery that he had started work on a home-made radiogram.

## CHAPTER VIII

### NOT A DOUBTING THOMAS

At this point, the scrapbook records the result of one year's activity at Burrows Lea. The account, published in *Psychic News*, began by saying, "Clergymen (some went in 'mufti') and doctors (co-operating 'confidentially') have been among nearly five thousand sufferers who have journeyed during the past year to Burrows Lea, Shere, Surrey, seeking surcease through the spiritual healing powers of Harry Edwards."

The weekly average of letters requesting absent healing had grown in twelve months from 1,500 to 3,000. Eighty per cent of patients receiving absent healing reported improvements and cures, and thirty per cent stated that they had been completely restored. During the preceding twelve months, approximately 126,000 letters had been received by Edwards from nearly every country in the world. Personal treatment had been given to 4,600 patients, of whom ninety per cent. reported improvement. It was estimated that 20,000 people had attended the twenty-one public meetings at which Edwards had demonstrated his gift of healing.

We now reach another milestone in the healing ministry. A national newspaper, the *Sunday Empire News*, decided to publish a feature, "Journey into The Unknown," to be conducted by Jack Thomas, its science reporter. The second article in the series concerned his visit to Burrows Lea, and was entitled "The Amazing Mr. Edwards." Jack Thomas wrote:

"I am going to tell you the story of the spirit healer Harry Edwards, who lives in the depths of the country in a mansion that once belonged to a British general; who was a captain in the

first world war, a Home Guard lieutenant in the second; who owns a printer's and stationer's business in London; and who is today the most famous and puzzling spiritual healer the British Empire can show."

Thomas drove from Dorking to Burrows Lea, with a bus-load of sick people. Edwards invited him into "the little church-like sanctuary beside the rambling house." He asked the reporter to place his hand on the back of one patient—an old man who had hobbled forward painfully with the aid of a stick—a severe case of osteo-arthritis.

"We will attempt this cure together," he said.

"I put my hand on the old man's back," Thomas wrote. "Flesh and muscles were as hard as a board. It was like feeling the surface of a smooth macadam road. Harry Edwards put his hands over my own and pressed down firmly. He pulled the patient backwards and forwards with a swaying motion. As he did so, the back beneath my fingers softened, grew supple became alive to the touch.

" 'Cross your legs,' Edwards said. 'Put your left knee over the right.' Doubtfully, the old man lifted his left leg. Only by a fraction of an inch did he fail in crossing it.

" 'Get up,' Edwards commanded. The old man straightened his back and began to walk across the room. One leg was shorter than the other. 'That leg wants putting right,' the healer said.

"The patient sat down again, and Edwards began to stroke the thighs with long, swift motions. Then exerting his full strength, he pulled on the short leg.

"I have to report that the leg appeared to stretch. When the old man stood up again, both legs were of equal length."

All this had taken only five minutes. "Where's my stick?" asked the old man. Edwards turned round, half fiercely, half humorously. "Get along!" he said. "You don't need a stick any more."

That, said the journalist, was "a pretty exciting story." It marked the beginning of a day which he thought must be one of the most interesting in his life. But it had other highlights. There was the girl crippled with infantile paralysis, her useless legs in steel calipers. "Put your hand on the base of her spine," Edwards asked. He did so. The healer's warm hands were laid over his. Again, healer and the girl began to sway together.

Edwards took the girl's legs on his lap and removed the calipers. "Push as hard as you can," he commanded. "Try to kick me over." She obeyed. The healer and his chair slid backwards beneath the force of her thrust. Then he stood away from the patient and held his hands to her. "Get up," he said. Holding her hands, he drew her gently to her feet.

This was the girl, Thomas commented, that he had seen carried from Dorking station to the waiting bus.

Next came a woman in a wheel-chair, whose face was drawn and her body contorted. She could neither sit nor lie in her chair. Months before paralysis had twisted her limbs.

"I want to walk again," she told the healer. "I used to be a dancer." Edwards drew her to him. "As he worked, incredible as it may seem, I saw that woman become straighter," recorded the reporter. "I saw the strain disappearing from her face. Edwards smiled at her confidently. 'You will walk again soon,' he said.

"For three and a half hours I sat beside this man. Outside, in the courtyard, there was every kind of vehicle in which the seekers had arrived. There were cars which you could not buy for £2,000 and hacks fit only for the scrap heap. Out of all the people who came that day, I saw what at first sight appeared to be cures in fifty per cent of the cases, some improvement in thirty per cent, and failure in perhaps twenty per cent.

"The cost to the patients was nothing—unless they cared to make a voluntary offering. There was neither suggestion nor

importuning for payment. Those are my first impressions of the work of a remarkable man."

Thomas told his readers that Edwards deplored the unwillingness of the medical profession, as a whole, to investigate the technique and results of spirit healing. But there were exceptions. He printed this letter to Edwards from a doctor in Surrey—he had the doctor's permission to do so:

"You may recollect that I was very distressed because my mother had a fall and a stroke, and was lying unconscious with but the slightest hope of recovery. You promised me that you would put her on your healing list. It is with a feeling of deep gratitude to God, to yourself and to your co-workers in spirit that I write to say that my mother has not only recovered consciousness, but the speech centre which for days was paralysed has suddenly functioned again. . . . Her own doctor gave me very little hope. . . . In over thirty years of medical practice, I have never known such a miraculous recovery."

I have quoted several descriptions of the healer. Here is Thomas's picture:

"In appearance he is a typical countryman—silver-haired, red-faced and vigorous. After a fourteen-hour working day he was ready to engage me in a give-and-take argument. When I said that many of the cures I had seen that day could be duplicated by a skilled psychiatrist or osteopath, he pointed out that he had no knowledge either of bone-setting or of orthodox medicine."

Edwards was prepared to admit that psychology might play a part in his cures. "It is difficult at times to draw a line between psychology and the psychic," he stated. "Obviously, if a patient is determined to get well and has complete faith in my spirit guides and their methods, the cure will be speeded up."

The journalist drew his readers' attention to the case of Christine Sparham, of Aveley, near Purfleet, Essex, a little girl, born blind, who had been in a famous eye hospital, had an

operation on her eyes, and remained blind until she was brought to Edwards.

Thomas added: "In February, this year, the girl's mother heard of the psychic healer and brought her to one of his public demonstrations at the Victoria Hall, London. The mother was sceptical. On February ninth the girl was led on to the platform and taken before the healer. Edwards smiled at her. Then, sprinkling water on to his hands, he held his fingers for a few minutes over the girl's eyes. Then he took a piece of white paper and held it in front of the child's face.

" 'Can you see anything?' he asked. Christine's actual words were, 'I can see a kind of lightness.' Once more Edwards placed his hands over her eyes. Then he tilted her chin upwards. 'What can you see now?' And Christine replied, 'I can see something bright.' She was looking at the lamps which lit the hall."

Today, wrote the reporter, Christine could distinguish colours, move with confidence about her home, and count fingers held before her face. The white cataract-like growth that disfigured the pupil of one eye had, it was claimed, diminished in size by a third. He took these facts to an official at the eye hospital Christine attended in 1914.

He said that it would be incorrect to describe Christine as totally blind. When they examined her, she had some perception of light. It was possible that much of the improvement the journalist described would have occurred normally.

Told of these inquiries, Edwards commented that he welcomed this type of investigation.

"Edwards, usually an even-tempered man," wrote Thomas, "is much put out if it is suggested that spirit healing is supernatural. 'In common with all other things, spirit healing is determined by natural law,' he says. 'Those who accept the idea that spirit healing is supernatural in character, must face the fact that it takes place with people of all races and creeds.

" 'Some people believe that the healings at Lourdes are the

result of God's intervention, but that the healing medium who gets similar results is the tool of a very cunning devil who does good deeds to ensnare humanity. There is no difference between healings at Lourdes and those in the healing sanctuary. Incomprehensible as it may seem, the Church deems it proper for one of its officials to pray for the sick, but regards a similar invocation by a healing medium with disapproval.' "

This feature by Jack Thomas lasted for seventeen weeks. It produced thousands of letters from readers from all over the country and from overseas. In his summary, Thomas stated that though he had dealt with all the religions, his references to psychic healing and Spiritualism constituted the bulk of his mail, for they represented eighty-five per cent of his correspondence. Edwards was deluged as a result of this series. He received ten thousand letters from readers of the *Sunday Empire News* asking for treatment for themselves or relatives and friends. Most of the writers had no previous contact with Spiritualism. Hundreds of readers went to the Shere Sanctuary or sought the healer's aid by telephone.



## CHAPTER IX

### ARE THE CURES LASTING?

SOON afterwards, *Psychic News* decided to conduct an inquiry. This newspaper had obviously been asked by readers whether the successes achieved in Edwards's public demonstrations were temporary or permanent. The inquiry arose as a sequel to a meeting at Bedford. First, *Psychic News* published this account from its local correspondent:

"There is in Bedford a lady who has been completely deaf for twelve years, hearing only with an electrical aid. Harry Edwards gave her treatment on November 21, with apparently no satisfactory result. She returned to her home disappointed but not disillusioned. On the morning of November 27, six days later, she was washing up the breakfast things. The house was quiet. Her electric hearing aid had been laid aside.

"Suddenly she heard the kitchen clock strike nine. She had never heard it before so clearly. She paused in her work and, as she says, 'listened with my own ears.' She heard the birds in the garden twittering, she heard the taps in the sink drip; children were playing in a garden next door, she heard them and could distinguish their voices, a thing she had never been able to do before except through a hearing aid. But her joy was short lived. She retained hearing for but five or six minutes. Then it 'went' again. Yes, the lady was disappointed but still very thankful. She has now engaged in healing treatment with a well-known local healer who promises her, as Harry Edwards did too, that she will, one day, hear again without an aid."

This correspondent investigated two or three other cases

resulting from Edwards's treatment at the Bedford meeting, but he did not meet with any where benefit, received at the time, had been maintained. In the case of a child whose right leg was in an iron splint, and who walked from the platform unaided, it was found that on the morning following treatment the complaint had reverted to its former state.

The same newspaper also printed a leading article which stated that it had, in recent months, given considerable prominence to the public healing meetings conducted by Edwards. It believes these to be of great propaganda value to Spiritualism. They provided a demonstration of one of the most important aspects of the work of spirit operators—that of healing the sick. Time after time, patients in the last extremities of human endurance, pronounced incurable by medical authorities, had sought relief from Edwards. The benefit received had been vouched for by medical men who examined them both before and after treatment was given.

People had been helped painfully on to the platform and had literally danced their way back to their seats in the hall. The blind had seen, the deaf had heard and the lame had been able to walk. But at Bedford, a few days after Edwards gave a typical demonstration its correspondent interviewed a few patients and found they had reverted to their former condition.

"We believe that our correspondent's report, though true, does not present the whole picture," added the article. "Perhaps he was unlucky in the cases he selected for his 'follow-up' story. We are convinced there are hundreds of cures where the improvement brought about by Edwards's psychic healing has been maintained.

The newspaper stated that it was interested only in the truth, and it was sure that Edwards, too, was anxious to know the facts. It wanted to present public healing in its proper perspective, and he wanted to be assured he was not wasting his time. To expect that every case should be healed, merely because the sufferer had

the good luck to hear of Edwards, was, of course, ridiculous. There must be failures and relapses in cases that were apparently successfully treated.

The editorial ended: "We invite all people who have been treated at these public demonstrations to send us reports. These reports should state: from which complaint the writer was suffering; the approximate date of the treatment; what improvement was apparent immediately after the treatment; and to what extent that improvement has been maintained. We regard this investigation as of great importance, and earnestly request the co-operation of all."

The healer's attitude was expressed in these words:

"I welcome, very much, the inquiry into the question of whether benefit conferred at healing demonstrations is maintained. Although I often ask patients to keep me informed, they rarely do, and often I only hear of progress third-hand. The point should be borne in mind that, at these services, I purposefully seek those suffering from diseases in a chronic state, and always complaints that are considered to be 'incurable.' This is done so that as a healing takes place any improvement can be seen by the congregation, for the purpose of the service is a demonstration.

"A second point is that usually the sufferers have had their complaint for many years. It is obvious, therefore, that when a change is demonstrated, it is essential for the patient to do all possible to encourage the healing by further spirit and physical help to restore the vitality and overcome wastage. That is why in my remarks before the actual healing I urge all sufferers to attend their local healing circles.

"When a patient has suffered from a physical disability for many years, the body has contracted habits to conform to the distortion, and often the most difficult task, after a healing has been effected, is to get the patient to realise the change and to overcome the old habit. Often I have seen a patient, who has

had his limbs freed from stress, and is able to walk freely and normally, immediately go back to sticks and the old habitual habit of walking. This is easily understood, but it shows that it is not always easy for a patient to take full advantage of the help that has been given.

"When, as is so often seen, a sufferer is freed from physical disability at a demonstration, it shows what healing can do, for even to give freedom from stress for a while indicates the greater maintained benefit that should be received when the patient follows out the advice I give. At demonstrations, I always point out that no undertaking can ever be given, and in view of the most serious nature of the cases I choose for healing, if only one of them is healed it makes the demonstration well worth-while.

"Healing is only limited by that which is possible within the 'natural laws,' both physical and spiritual. For example, healing cannot make the 'old' young again. Sometimes sufferers chronically afflicted with wastage, atrophy, joints made fast by surgery, should not build up their hopes that they will be immediately made strong in a few seconds, when a period of healing is necessary.

"Recently, a father brought his daughter suffering from paralysis of both legs from birth. Both the limbs were as the legs of a baby. Yet the father told me his wife was waiting for a telegram to hear that her daughter could walk. The spirit doctors help to the full, within their capacity and according to the natural laws that govern us; they have not omnipotent power, but their powers are great, as we daily see."

Three weeks later, *Psychic News* devoted a whole page and another leading article to the results of its inquiry. A selection of letters was printed from readers giving their experiences after having been treated by the healer.

The result of this inquiry, based upon the letters received, was that forty-four per cent said they had been completely cured, another forty-four per cent stated they were still making pro-

gress, and only twelve per cent declared that they had derived no benefit. The newspaper made the point that people from all walks of life, suffering from all manner of diseases, had contributed to this analysis. The newspaper concluded:

"One remarkable point stands out. Of those who wrote saying they derived no benefit at all, or found the effects of the treatment wore off within a day or two, nearly all believe they could be cured by continual, or follow-up treatment."

The leading article dealing with the subject stated:

"Our Bedford correspondent—a trained and responsible journalist—reported recently that, with a number of patients treated at a public healing demonstration by Harry Edwards, the apparent improvement was not maintained in a single instance. While we considered that this report did not fairly present the complete picture of public healing, but rather that our correspondent had been unlucky in his selection of cases, it was nevertheless our duty to record the facts he presented.

"It would obviously be worse than useless for Harry Edwards to tour the country treating cases that came to him as a last resort, if a few days later all the apparent improvement had been lost and the patients were in the same condition as they were before spiritual aid had been given. As an independent newspaper, interested only in truth, we initiated an inquiry, asking for reports—whether negative or positive—from patients who had received treatment from Edwards at his public healing demonstrations. The results amply justify the faith we had in the efficacy of this form of treatment. Not all of the apparent cures were permanent (that would be too much to hope for), but the improvement is sustained, and even increasing, in a large number of cases.

"One thing must be stressed—and it is urged also by Edwards at all his meetings. Patients who have the ills of years apparently corrected by a few minutes' treatment must realise that there is danger of a relapse into their former condition unless healing is

continued after the initial 'cure.' Absent healing, or treatment at a local healing centre—preferably both—is a necessary follow-up to the spectacular results obtained at a public demonstration.

"We are confident that if this advice had been followed by all patients, then the results of our inquiry—remarkable as they are—would have been more striking still. Psychic healing must not be regarded as the universal panacea for all ills. It is sometimes possible for aid from the spirit world to alleviate afflictions that cannot be cured by orthodox methods—but it is often much easier and equally efficacious to see a doctor and swallow a bottle of medicine." \*

The following week Edwards added his own observations:

"I am, naturally, very pleased with the percentages of success that have been found through your inquiry. I think particular significance rests on the fact that at demonstrations I select the most chronic and severe cases present, and that it is correct to say that each one comes within the 'incurable' category.

"Another interesting comparison is that the percentages are higher than with absent healing, which are eighty-seven per cent betterment, with forty-three per cent cured. Here, again, as a coincidence, it is thirteen per cent who do not seem to react."

As a footnote to this investigation, I should like to record that the Edinburgh Psychic College kept in touch with patients treated by Edwards at their Usher Hall meeting and, in the words of their statement, "found that most of the wonderful results then reported were being well maintained." But this is in anticipation, for the full account appears later.

## CHAPTER X

### EDWARDS ANSWERS ONE SURGEON

MEANWHILE, Edwards continued with his self-dedicated task of making his gift available to people all over the country. The scrapbook records a visit to the university town of Cambridge, where the local *Daily News* was astounded by the results obtained. It published a three-column picture of the healer giving treatment to one patient. Its reporter, under the heading, "Paralysed Children Walked Off Dais Unaided," began his description.

"Quite frankly, when I walked into the Guildhall on Sunday afternoon for the service of healing, I was in as sceptical a frame of mind about Spiritualism as anybody could be. When I walked out about two hours later, I was so overwhelmed by what I had seen that I walked about the town for over an hour, going back in my mind over all I had seen and heard to find where or if there was any catch. I could not find one and I do not think that any of the seven hundred persons present could either."

You can judge the effect the demonstration had on him by his description of what he saw:

"The first case Mr. Edwards dealt with was four-year-old Philip Goodliff, of Ramsey, who was afflicted with infantile paralysis last August and has not been able to walk properly since. He was carried by his mother on to the dais, wearing an iron support on his left leg. This was removed. Mr. Edwards went over to the boy, placed his hands round Philip's back, and a few seconds later Philip was moving his leg about. A minute later, he was walking with the support of Mr. Edwards, and for

the remainder of the afternoon he was romping around the front of the hall as happy as any child could be.

"Philip's eleven-year-old sister, Thelma, who had been a victim of the same disease since she was born, underwent a similar process, but though she was able to walk for the first time in her life, she will have to undergo a short treatment of massage for a time in order to accustom her limbs to being used.

"Possibly the most interesting of the cases dealt with by Mr. Edwards was that of Mrs. Daisy Sheart, of Hills Road, Cambridge, who has suffered from disseminated sclerosis for the last three years. A Polish lady doctor, taking advantage of Mr. Edwards's invitation for any sceptical member of the medical profession to examine Mrs. Sheart, did so, and told the audience that all she could do to ease the complaint was recommend continual massage.

"The doctor looked on as Mr. Edwards proceeded by what, to any non-Spiritualist, must have appeared a miracle, just to take hold of Mrs. Sheart, shake her and then induce her to walk. Twice across the dais and down the steps with Mr. Edwards's support, and then Mrs. Sheart, moving her limbs freely for the first time for three years, walked back to her seat without support, put on her coat, and with a look of utter incredulity in her eyes, continued to watch Mr. Edwards for the remainder of the service.

"There is not space to deal in detail with any more of the cases which Mr. Edwards undertook. All were at least, in part, successful, and those who were not wholly cured were assured that only normal medical treatment was now necessary.

"If all this was hypnotism or fake cure, then seven hundred other people were bamboozled besides myself. If it was not, then I can only regard the events of the afternoon as miraculous—and the age of miracles is supposed to have passed!"

Let me stress that at this Cambridge meeting, Edwards treated Philip Goodliff, the four-year-old boy suffering from infantile



paralysis, who was unable to walk without calipers. So successful was the healer that for the rest of the meeting the leg iron was discarded and the mother had to remove the boy's boots, because he was making so much noise hopping about the hall. Notwithstanding this fact and also the mother's testimony that Philip could not turn a foot that was once twisted, and that he no longer dragged one leg behind him, Mr. Noel J. Smith, a Peterborough orthopædic surgeon, declared that there had been no beneficial effect. The surgeon's views were published in the *Peterborough Citizen and Advertiser*, where the newspaper stated:

"The treatment of two Ramsey children by Mr. Harry Edwards has had no beneficial effect, according to Mr. Noel J. Smith, Peterborough and district's orthopædic surgeon. Since he contracted infantile paralysis last August, four-year-old Philip Goodliff has been a patient of Mr. Smith. His sister, Thelma, who has been a cripple since birth, began receiving the specialist's treatment at the age of three and has had it for eight years.

"Last week's *Citizen and Advertiser* contained the report of an interview with Mrs. Goodliff in which she stated that she was overjoyed at what Mr. Edwards had done for her children. Mr. Smith, remarking on the report, told a *Citizen and Advertiser* representative, "The treatment of infantile paralysis, from the medical point of view, is on very firmly established lines. These procedures have been severely tested during the past five years on account of outbreaks of infantile paralysis all over the world, and orthopædic treatment has stood the test extremely well.

"It is an exact treatment, any variation from which could cause permanent paralysis in a person who otherwise would have got better. Therefore, as orthopædic surgeon of Peterborough and district, I feel it is my duty to point out most strongly that to the medical profession—which is always prepared to take the broad view—there is only one treatment of infantile paralysis

and that is on scientific and proved lines. I know the case mentioned and I am sorry to say there has been no miraculous cure.'

"Questioned about Thelma—Mr. Edwards told her mother he had put back a displaced bone in her spine—Mr. Smith replied: 'The tapping back of displaced bones in the spine is an age-old chiropractic stunt for which there is absolutely no medical foundation. Patients have been X-rayed and tested before this has been done and no displacement has been revealed.

" 'If a person does displace one of the bones of the spine, it is an extremely serious injury and it most certainly requires more than a mild pushing back. There is absolutely no medical foundation whatsoever for this theory.' Stressing the danger of submitting to such treatment, Mr. Smith added that many psychic healers had such strong personalities that they could convince patients they were better even if they were not."

Edwards speedily replied to the surgeon in the same newspaper:

"Mr. Noel Smith does not question that the displaced vertebræ in Thelma's spine are now in place. She has had her disability since birth. Her spine was corrected in a matter of seconds, with her body fully clothed and without even one twinge of pain. Can Dr. Noel Smith explain this?

"He is in obvious error when he assumes that the vertebræ were replaced by 'tapping' or 'chiropractic.' Such treatment would not be possible with a fully clothed body in the space of five seconds. Furthermore, no 'tapping' took place and I have no knowledge of 'chiropractic.'

"The pertinent question is: Was not Thelma's case considered to be 'incurable'? And if her spine could have been straightened by any process known to medical science, why was it not done? Thelma's improved walking was obvious to all.

"Concerning Philip, I understand the following represents his condition before he came to me for treatment:

"He was discharged from hospital suffering from infantile

paralysis, with one leg useless, unable to walk, and had, therefore, to be kept in bed.

"Under medical supervision, a full-length caliper had to be made and was supplied a fortnight before I saw him.

"With the aid of this caliper, he could only walk dragging his foot behind him and with one foot badly twisted.

"That was the position when Philip was brought to me for treatment. He had to be carried up the stairs on to the platform. The time it took for the healing was only a matter of a few seconds, with the boy fully clothed. I then asked the mother to remove the caliper. The result was:

"The boy could support his body on his bad leg.

"He could use the leg for walking with normal leg and foot action.

"He walked down the stairs, holding my fingers.

"The twist in his foot disappeared.

"For the next hour he romped about the hall, without the caliper. His mother took his boots off, to save him making so much noise.

"How does Mr. Noel Smith explain this?

"He then suggests it was my strong personality that accomplished these things. Is such a theory tenable with a girl crippled from birth and a boy only four years old?

"Incidentally there was another lady (an adult), also suffering from the same complaint from birth, who was so helped that she could lift both legs knee-high and descended the stairs in a fairly normal fashion for the first time in her life. How can any influence of a mind over another's paralysed body of so long standing restore strength to paralysed limbs?

"Lastly, Mr. Noel Smith implies that through 'spirit healing' of spinal cases there is danger of 'permanent paralysis in a person who would otherwise have got better.' I have had brought to me many unfortunate cases of 'incurable' paralysis that resulted from medical treatment, but I challenge Mr. Noel Smith to cite

but one case where paralysis has followed spirit treatment. On the other hand, I can quote many cases where the so-called 'incurable,' the rejected of the medical profession, have been restored.

"Psychic healers are only too willing to acknowledge the great work of medical science and are always willing to co-operate. It is now time that doctors, in general, began to recognise the psychic healing potential and not criticise without having studied the results that follow spirit healing."

The best answer came from the boy's mother, who wrote to *Psychic News*:

"I, Mary Goodliff, the mother of Philip Goodliff, declare that Philip was born on June 4, 1943. His leg was quite sound until he had paralysis in August 1947.

"The trouble with his leg began about the end of August of the same year. Mr. Noel Smith attended him on or about August 24, 1947, and took him into Peterborough Hospital as a suspect for infantile paralysis. This was later confirmed by the hospital at Newmarket. When he went into hospital he could not use his leg at all.

"He came out of hospital at the end of January 1948 with his leg but slightly better, and he could walk on it just a very little. The iron was put on the leg about a week before he went to see Mr. Harry Edwards for treatment at Cambridge. After treatment by Mr. Edwards the condition was much better. He could run about without the iron, but occasionally his leg would let him down.

"Mr. Noel Smith had advised that he should continue to wear the iron, as this may help to strengthen the leg. Mr. Edwards did not suggest giving up the use of the iron immediately, but said that he would probably want to use it occasionally and that he would need further treatment, the nature of which was indicated to the healers present.

"I have been advised by the doctors to give him as much rest

as possible, but I find the greatest difficulty in doing this as he is never still if he can possibly help it, constantly running about and threatening people with a toy pistol, and there is no semblance whatever of any pathetic little figure.

"He is full of life and thoroughly enjoying himself in every way like any normal child. In my view he is on the high road to recovery, and it is only a question of time. I think the turning-point in his condition occurred when he had the treatment from Mr. Harry Edwards."

Now it is the turn of a Scottish newspaper, the *Daily Record*, to publish an account of a healing demonstration in Glasgow in one of Scotland's largest halls. Here is the newspaper's report:

"A white-haired Thornliebank woman who had not walked for six years took a few faltering steps across the stage of St. Andrew's Hall, Glasgow, last night, watched by three thousand people attending a spirit-healing demonstration in connection with the centenary celebrations of Glasgow Spiritualists.

"Several doctors were among neutral observers in the platform party, which included Lord Provost Sir Hector McNeill. The medicos were invited by spirit healer Harry Edwards to examine the cases. It was Dr. Stuart Laidlaw, the city's M.O.H., who examined the Thornliebank woman, a disseminated sclerosis victim.

"'In healing there is no pain,' commented Edwards, grey-haired slightly-built Englishman working on his subjects by stroking and manipulating their limbs. The woman did not murmur as he 'unlocked' her limbs, or as he guided her hesitant steps across the stage.

"A woman doctor who confirmed the 'poker-back' of a young auburn-haired girl, found the girl's spine to be 'quite free' after brief treatment by the demonstrator."

The *Illustrated Leicester Chronicle* soon afterwards devoted a whole page to a local demonstration and gave most of its space to a picture of Edwards assisting a boy to walk. Another

photograph showed the healer's success in getting a woman to raise her hand above her head, the first time she had been able to do so for ten years. This newspaper published its account under the caption, "Miracle Man," and declared, "Miracle man is a lay description of Harry Edwards, who has earned a considerable reputation as a psychic healer. Spiritualists would no doubt prefer to describe him as a miracle medium."

Now we have reached the end of the first of the two scrap-books. It is significant that these contain an account by a French journal, showing that the news of the healing was continuing to spread beyond these shores.

## CHAPTER XI

### ANOTHER SURGEON PAYS TRIBUTE

WE have now reached the half-way mark. The trickle of Press publicity has broadened into a stream and then into a wide river. It has yet to reach full flood.

The second scrapbook, which records the meteoric rise of Edwards, starts in a subdued fashion. It is a report in a Coventry newspaper which describes Edwards as a faith healer, which, of course, he is not. The point of interest in this newspaper report is that a local surgeon came on to the platform to watch and check the healer's treatments.

Later, the newspaper interviewed the surgeon, who stated: "There was a great deal of improvement in the spinal cases which I examined. There is no doubt that the misalignments were reduced appreciably. Some of the cases of paralysis were of long-standing, but there was an improvement. I don't know of any other form of treatment which would produce results so quickly."

The surgeon added that he believed that spiritual healing could produce results and that it was recognised, not only by the Anglican Church, but also by an appreciable part of the B.M.A. It was practised, he asserted, by certain Harley Street consultants. In view of this statement, it is hard to understand any medical or even clerical opposition.

The next few pages record healing results which were now becoming commonplace to Edwards. In the early days, he would have regarded these as outstanding, but he was getting accustomed to the way in which the healing was being accelerated, and the ease with which even difficult cases were responding.

All the time, Edwards was being inundated with requests to give demonstrations all over the country. When he visited Scotland, the *Sunday Post* used these headlines: "Girl Cripple Walks For First Time In Her Life—'Miracle' Cures Thrill Usher Hall Audience."

It is worth quoting the impact made by Edwards on Scotland, because its inhabitants are not given to easy demonstration or emotion:

"About two thousand people of all ages who packed the Usher Hall, Edinburgh, last night saw seventeen-year-old Jessie Devine, Highfield Road, Hillhead, Kirkintilloch, walk for the first time in her life. Jessie had just been treated by Mr. Harry Edwards, London, at a healing service organised by the Edinburgh Psychic College. Jessie came to the platform supported by two friends.

"The huge audience, which had already witnessed half-a-dozen examples of Mr. Edwards's abilities, hushed as she told him she was a sufferer from spinal curvature. She had never been able to walk. For about five minutes Mr. Edwards swayed to and fro, jerked her legs, and massaged her arms and back. Then he lifted her up with his hands. Jessie raised her legs, stood on tip-toe and walked with him across the platform.

"Later, as she walked unsteadily out of the hall to catch the train home, she told the *Sunday Post*: 'I've been in hospital several times for long spells. This has made me very happy. Now I am going to be a nurse to help people who are crippled as I was.' Jessie's friends in Kirkintilloch were astonished when they saw her arrive from Edinburgh and walking from the bus stance to her home—fully two hundred yards. She was leaning on her mother's arm. She told a *Sunday Post* man she would have to practise walking as much as possible, 'for soon I hope to be able to take a job.'

"Mrs. Nan Morrison, Newtongrange, who had been suffering from sclerosis, was carried on to the platform. After a few



minutes' treatment, she rose and walked slowly to her seat. By this time young and old, some with their legs in irons, were lining up for treatment.

"After five minutes a disabled miner, James Duffy, Sunnybrae Terrace, Steelend, Fife, crippled as a result of a broken spine, was walking smartly across the platform without the aid of his sticks. Mrs. Barbara Malczewski, Abercorn Road, Edinburgh, wife of a Polish soldier, a sufferer for four years from disseminated sclerosis, was told by Mr. Edwards, 'This is your lucky day.' With shining eyes she rose from the chair, walked, raised her legs and danced. 'Oh, I am so happy,' she cried. 'It is gone.'"

Edwards also visited St. Andrew's Hall, Glasgow, and the effect of this meeting is best described by a story which appeared in the *People*, which has one of the largest circulations of any Sunday newspaper. The writer, Charles Rowe, who had been inquiring into spiritual healing, began first of all with a remarkable cure of a girl crooner. Here is a summary of his article:

"I sat in a London night club the other day and listened to a tall, dark-haired young woman crooning a song. She had a pleasant voice and there was an enthusiastic round of applause as she finished. She took her bow, then ran off the floor to hide the tears that were streaming down her cheeks. 'They said I would never do it,' she was saying loudly enough for the people near her to hear. 'They said I would never sing again . . .'"

Her name was Eunice Metcalfe. Just over two years ago, when she was achieving fame as a singer with well-known dance bands, she became ill, and the doctors diagnosed her trouble as disseminated sclerosis. This attacks the spine and paralyses parts of the body. There is no medical cure, and the patient gets steadily worse. For two years she was almost a cripple. She walked with sticks and her hands were also affected. Doctors said that her throat was almost bound to be attacked and she must resign herself never to sing in public again.

"Yet there she was before me in a night club," wrote Charles

Rowe. "And in a few days' time, she will be starting a new career as a music-hall artist, with a first appearance in a North of England theatre! Her story is similar to scores that I have investigated since I started this inquiry. For Eunice Metcalfe is convinced that she was cured by Harry Edwards, probably the best-known of all the many hundreds of people who have set themselves up as spirit healers. 'I went to see him four months ago,' she told me. 'I came back feeling better. I was able to walk properly the very next day. My hands got better. And I am as fit now as I was before I became ill.' "

Her own doctor, who did not know that she had been given spirit healing, told Rowe, "She has made a miraculous recovery." All over Britain, he added, there were tens of thousands of people like Eunice Metcalfe, with far more faith in spirit healers than in doctors. Some of these healers had "practices" far larger than any doctor. Harry Edwards was one example.

Then came the references to the St. Andrew's Hall demonstration:

"At one of the demonstrations that Edwards often gives in public, Dr. J. C. Laidlaw, the Medical Officer of Health for Glasgow, watched him at work, and he was reported to have said that Edwards had done things which 'would have caused the patient to scream in agony if they had been done by a doctor.' "

The reporter asked Dr. Laidlaw to elaborate on this comment. This is what he said: "My reactions really were that where the complaint had as its basis a hysterical condition, which could be helped by faith, Edwards's work was effective enough. But where there was real damage to the body—such as blindness or deafness or complete paralysis—there was no effect at all. I think the whole thing depends on the faith of the individual. My conclusion was that where pain was caused by nerves, and not by real physical damage, he was very helpful. Frankly, I think the whole thing depends on the patients having complete faith in the man."

Then Charles Rowe gave the opinion of another doctor, who asked for his name to be withheld. Moved by curiosity, he went to Edwards for treatment himself. "In my opinion," this doctor told the journalist, "Edwards is a very honest man. Certainly I got benefit from his treatment of a throat complaint from which I was suffering, although after a while there was a tendency for it to slip back again. The benefit did not seem to last.

"My wife, however, who went to him at the same time, got immediate relief from blinding headaches which had been troubling her for over a year, and in her case there was no relapse."

Summing up his inquiry, Charles Rowe's verdict was: "Undoubtedly spirit healers like Mr. Edwards are capable of curing some people whose complaints are beyond the powers of orthodox doctors. But like Dr. Laidlaw I am convinced that their 'miracle' cures are almost entirely confined to cases of mental and nervous disorders, where 'faith,' 'hypnotism' or 'psychological treatment'—call it what you like—have succeeded in bridging the gap between mind and body. . . . But cures do happen and cures that defy ordinary medical treatment."

So many people believed in spirit healers, and for good reasons that the British Medical Association should make the move that would decide the question for all time. If organised doctors set up a small committee to investigate the claims of spirit healers, he was sure they would co-operate. Six cases could be produced of recognised disease, and on the results of diagnosis and treatment, some scientific evidence could be gained.

"That spirit healers cure is undeniable," he concluded. "That they perform 'miracles' beyond the power of doctors or of scientific explanation is another matter. It is high time the public were given an honest report by scientists who can secure the facts that have been denied to me."

You will notice that Charles Rowe ends on a non-committal note, which is so often the case with newspaper "investigations."

They describe the striking results achieved through mediumship and then, in case these reports annoy orthodox readers who might want to cancel their newspapers, a note of caution is frequently introduced as a face-saving tactic. You have only to examine, as I have done, many of these newspaper "inquiries" to realise that so often they conclude with a sitting-on-the-fence attitude. They remind me of the observation by Lloyd George in the House of Commons, "The Right Hon. member has been sitting on the fence for so long that the iron has entered into his soul."

I shall, however, return to the *People* later and discuss what happened when it conducted another "inquiry."

Edwards became the centre of controversy in the cathedral city of Salisbury when the Rev. W. Mauleverer a local vicar invited him to conduct a healing service in his church. When he heard of the proposed service, the Bishop of Salisbury intervened and forbade the demonstration to take place. The Christian Spiritualists of Salisbury, who felt that there was a great need in their city for a visit from Edwards, engaged a theatre and invited the clergy and churchmen to be present. The Spiritualists were justified by the success of the meeting.

It is a regrettable fact that too often the churches have been reactionary and have refused to keep abreast of modern developments. Again and again, they have sought to create a monopoly of divine power and wisdom—as if this were possible—forgetting that there are countless avenues of approach to the Godhead, which is no respecter of persons and, for reasons which man cannot understand, distributes its gifts in a manner that often displeases the orthodox. I have yet to record, with regret, the action of the Archbishop of Canterbury in rebuking Edwards.

Several clergymen were present at this Salisbury demonstration. One of them commented to Edwards, "Your gift is God-given and such healing should be part of the work of the

Church." Another volunteered, "I only wish this service had taken place in my church."

The healer was not silent concerning the bishop's ban. After all, it is galling, when you know you possess a divine gift, and are anxious to utilise it in co-operation with clergymen and doctors, to find that a bishop who should know better is an obstacle. After he had treated one sufferer from osteo-arthritis—the sufferer said he had "been in hell for fifteen years"—and given him considerable relief, Edwards commented, "If the bishop's ban had not been overcome, you would still be in hell with pain."

In another case, where he straightened the curved spine of a woman, he said to the audience: "Is not this healing a Christian act? I regard it as spiritual healing in the truest sense of the word, and though such healings can take place anywhere, in a theatre such as this, or a pub, how much more fitting would it be in your local church with your own ministers helping the suffering?"

The Salisbury papers printed lengthy reports of this meeting. The *Salisbury Times*, for example, which headlined its account "Miracles of Healing," mentioned that the Rev. W. Mauleverer was one of the clergymen in the audience. The bishop could not make him stay away from the meeting. After stating that the lesson read was the story in the Acts of the Apostles of the lame man being healed, this newspaper quoted part of the speech made by Edwards:

"It was our hope that this service would have taken place in one of your local churches, but the powers of the Church intervened and prevented it. Yet the act of healing is a divine act through whomsoever it takes place, and there is no more fitting place for it than in one of the buildings sanctified for the worship of God.

"Whatever takes place this afternoon cannot be the result of myself, or anyone on the platform, or in the audience. I am told there are four or five rows of people here who require healing.

Many are unable to stand and some are in bath chairs. If we are able to give relief to some of these it can only be because the same power that Peter and John used in healing the lame man is here and is being used through our spirit people who are close to us."

Of the healing that took place the newspaper wrote:

"A little child who had been crying throughout the first part of the service was taken on to the stage by its mother and Mr. Edwards said it was suffering from a nervous disorder. After he had put his hand on the child's back and spoken quietly, it ceased crying and was taken out. Mr. Edwards said they would help the child.

"A woman was then carried up apparently helpless and placed in a chair. She said she had been in that condition for three years and had been discharged from hospital as incurable. Mr. Edwards closed his eyes, moved his hands over her back and her arms and legs, then told her to move her arms up and down, which she did. Then she moved her legs, and a few minutes later she stood up holding Mr. Edwards's hands and walked slowly across the stage.

"Similar results followed in a case of creeping paralysis from which the woman said she had been suffering for nine years. After treatment, she walked down the steps to her seat. Next, an elderly man walked up slowly with the aid of a stick. He said his trouble was arthritis of ten years' standing. He had received electrical treatment without success. While he sat in a chair, Mr. Edwards prepared to treat him, first taking off his own coat and rolling up his sleeves. Finding the sufferer's legs were stiff, he pressed his hands over them, then told him to move them, which he did with apparent ease, then he stood up and walked across the stage holding Mr. Edwards's hands. Finally he walked off without using his stick.

"A woman, who was helped up to the stage, said she had been ill seven years and been treated at the infirmary. She could not

put on her stockings or shoes, and could not clean a floor. After Mr. Edwards had treated her, she stood up and walked away happy.

"Next came a young man with two sticks. He said he was blind in one eye and paralysed in both legs. He had been like that for four years and had spent one year in a Bath hospital. After a short treatment he was able to walk away holding Mr. Edwards's hands, but his sight was not restored, as the eye required further treatment.

"A little girl, aged five and a half, suffering from a twisted spine was treated next and that trouble was corrected. Then came a woman with curvature of the spine which she said was the result of a fall two years ago. The hospital authorities said they could do no more for her. Mr. Edwards told her to put her hand on his shoulders and relax. She did so and, while he held her, he told her to bend her body from side to side, then move her head similarly. Very soon her spine was pronounced to have been straightened and she walked off amid applause from the audience.

"A different case followed. A woman with one hand in bandages went up to Mr. Edwards, saying the arteries in the arm had been cut and affected her hand. Saying that spirit help would be given her he removed the bandages and bent the twisted fingers and thumb up and down. Looking astonished, she said there was no pain now, but previously she could hardly bear anyone to touch her hand. 'I can scarcely believe it,' she said. Telling her to practise moving her fingers herself, he turned to another case.

"This was a young man who said he had had arthritis in the spine for twelve years, and he was followed by one who said he had had arthritis in the toes for fifteen years, both of whom were helped. A deaf woman was next treated and gradually it appeared that hearing was restored, because she said she could hear Mr. Edwards clicking his fingernails and when he whis-

pered, amid laughter, 'Can you hear me, Mother?' she replied, 'Yes, I can.' "

A month later, there was another controversy, this time at Harrogate. It began with an account in the *Harrogate Herald*, which read:

"Sick people, many of them suffering from diseases that have been diagnosed as incurable, came from all parts of the North of England to attend the demonstration of spirit healing given by Harry Edwards in the Royal Hall on Sunday afternoon.

"Stretcher cases and scores of patients in invalid chairs kept helpers and members of the St. John Ambulance Brigade busy throughout the afternoon. A long, heartbreaking queue formed below the stage of the Royal Hall soon after the demonstration began, and before he left, two and a half hours later, Harry Edwards had seen them all.

"Had he healed any of them? Many members of the audience declared that they saw miracles of healing on Sunday afternoon. From the standpoint of an impartial observer it seems more true to say that many people came away from their brief treatment feeling much better. Mr. Edwards was particularly successful with cases that were in need of spinal osteopathy. But the crowd of sufferers was not less heartbreaking at the end of the demonstration than it had been at the beginning."

In the same issue this newspaper published a leading article in which it warned Edwards about his responsibility. This was too much for Edwards, who replied:

"Several implications may lead your readers to an incorrect impression of our work. There is a vast difference between 'faith' healing and 'spiritual' healing, and it is quite wrong to describe our healing as 'faith' healing.

"You state, 'Is it fair and kind to offer hope of renewed health?' and 'What of the days to come when despair may be made blacker by new disappointments?'

"Yet in your report of the service you write: 'Many members



of the audience declared they saw miracles of healing. From the standpoint of an impartial observer it seems more true to say that many people came away feeling much better. . . . Mr. Edwards was particularly successful with cases that were in need of spinal osteopathy.'

"Each of the cases treated was a so-called 'incurable.' Medical science could do no more for them. They were the rejected of the hospital and doctors. Your own testimony of the betterment seen well answers your criticism.

"If you appreciated our work and knew more about it, you would know that, while we can give no promise, we see such a high percentage of improvement (even with 'incurables') that our mission gives untold happiness to many whose future was dark.

"You write of 'the grave responsibility of the healer' in offering hope to the incurable and the sick. When I am privileged to give help, should I not be incurring the gravest of all responsibilities in denying such help to the afflicted? My only regret was that time did not permit our helping all who needed it.

"I have already received many letters from those who were helped in Harrogate, testifying to the easement and betterment they have received and maintained."

Another Harrogate newspaper, the *Advertiser*, published this letter from a correspondent who took exception to the criticism that the *Herald* had made:

"Why is it that the press is so loth to give any publicity to the men and women who devote their lives to the work of spiritual healing? On Sunday afternoon Mr. Harry Edwards packed the Royal Hall to capacity when giving a fine demonstration of this healing power. Yet doctors are afraid to come forward to act as independent witnesses of this work, and pressmen are afraid to devote more than the smallest paragraph to the recording of the meeting. Why?

"Surely to every thinking person it is of interest to know that

Mr. Harry Edwards has cured, and is curing, hundreds of people with ailments of long standing that have not yielded to orthodox treatment. This should have as much news value to the ordinary person as the crowning of the beauty queen and the winner of the vegetable marrow contest.

"One paper, being careful to avoid expressing a too definite opinion either way, asks, 'Is it fair and kind to offer the hope of renewed health to so many on such slender grounds?' Judging by the overwhelming support Mr. Edwards received at this meeting, and every other he has given up and down the country, he could hardly have built up such a reputation had the results not been satisfactory beyond any doubt. Whether the local press likes it or not, the public are interested and would like to see Mr. Edwards's work given the publicity it deserves.

"To an ordinary observer it was a very inspiring demonstration, amid beautiful surroundings, given with a sincerity and simplicity which was most impressing. I have no doubt that, out of the hundreds present on Sunday afternoon, there are many like myself on whom this meeting has made a very lasting impression."

Undeterred by the warning about his "responsibilities," Edwards continued his self-imposed mission of making his powers available far and wide. Ilford is the scene of the next demonstration to arouse Press interest, with the local newspaper referring to the "amazing scenes" witnessed by the hundreds who packed the Ilford Town Hall.

"Dozens were turned away," said this newspaper. "Many stood throughout the service—and more than half of those who attended were sufferers who hoped for healing. Some were lame; some partly paralysed; some crippled by arthritis. Others were blind, deaf, or handicapped in their speech. Bathchair invalids crowded the space below the platform, and nearby sat the most pathetic cases of all—hopeful mothers, carrying in their arms their afflicted children."

The newspaper described the healer as a "forceful, distinguished man of about fifty-five." Stripping off his jacket, he rolled up his sleeves and invited any sufferer from arthritis to mount the platform. Wrote the reporter:

"Leaning heavily on two sticks and helped by friends, Mrs. B. Clarke, of Lichfield Road, Dagenham, was half pushed, half lifted up the stairs. Sinking heavily on to a chair on the platform, she told Mr. Edwards that she had suffered from arthritis for eleven years and had not been able to walk properly for two years.

"Mr. Edwards felt her right wrist which, she said, had been locked for years. After a few seconds' massage, a gasp went up from the audience as she was seen to move it freely. Mr. Edwards next grasped her legs and, after passing his hands over the limbs, bent the knees sharply. He helped Mrs. Clarke to her feet. After a few false starts, she walked down the stairs and off the platform without her sticks.

"The atmosphere in the hall was now tense with expectancy, and when Mr. Edwards called for the next case, there was a rush from all sides. He chose another woman, who said she had been suffering agonies for ten years from rheumatoid arthritis. When she sat down on the platform, she could not move her head more than a few inches. Mr. Edwards placed his fingers on her neck—and in a second she was shaking her head violently from side to side. She was helped on to the platform because her legs had been set in one position.

"'I can't remember the last time I walked down stairs,' she told the audience, but after treatment similar to Mrs. Clarke's, she walked down unaided after less than five minutes, beaming as she said, 'I felt no pain at all.'

"Next came Miss Alice Smith, of Abbotsford Road, Goodmayes, who for twenty years, had suffered from a 'poker back' (fixed spine). Mr. Edwards sat her with her back to the audience and asked if any doctor or sceptic in the audience would like to

test the case. No doctor was present, but two men volunteered to feel the spine before and after this demonstration.

"As Miss Smith sat there, rigid from neck to waist, they pronounced her spine set, the vertebrae appeared welded in a solid rod. Mr. Edwards worked his fingers up and down the spine, rocking Miss Smith to and fro as he did so. Those near enough could hear the bones click as they became freed. One of the sceptics felt again. 'Wonderful'! was his comment.

"Another spectacular demonstration was that on twenty-two-year-old Olive Swindale, of Eton Gardens, Dagenham, who said she had suffered from a curved spine for eight years, following a fall. Another doubter from the audience checked up as after a few manipulations Mr. Edwards straightened the spine.

"Last case of that kind was of Miss May Brassington, Kinfauns Road, Goodmayes, who said that for years she had been unable to hold anything in her right hand. Mr. Edwards jerked it sharply a few times—and she was able to grip coins and paper as tightly as any normal person.

"To all those treated he stressed: 'You must continue now with massage. Don't fall back into the old use of your limbs—use your new strength.'

"Two women who complained of acute deafness were treated next. One, who said she could not hear Mr. Edwards clicking his fingers about two inches away from her ears, heard him perfectly from the body of the hall when she had returned to her place after he had stroked the back of her head and ears.

"A man and a woman, both partially blind were treated next. Mr. Edwards dipped his fingers in water, pressed them on their eyes with a stroking motion—and both professed their vision was much improved. 'I can see much clearer—it's wonderful!' exclaimed the woman."

The *Essex Guardian* also published this tribute from one of its contributors:

"I attended the meeting advertised as a 'Demonstration of

Spiritual Healing' at the Town Hall on Sunday, ready for anything—frankly I did not know what to expect. Some had told me that miracles had been wrought through Mr. Edwards. Others maintained that his meetings merely caused unnecessary suffering by treacherously raising false hopes of cure in those who could never be better.

"As the meeting progressed, I began to understand how the two ideas had grown up. Miracles of a kind certainly were performed. Sufferers whose limbs had for years been locked by disseminated sclerosis (formerly called 'creeping paralysis,' a reputedly incurable disease which starts with a 'poker back') had their spines restored to suppleness in a few moments. Men and women crippled by arthritis had their locked joints loosened (I heard the bones click free myself) without feeling the slightest pain. Those suffering from deafness or blindness also professed improvement after his treatment.

"On the other hand, those who entered the hall in bath-chairs were wheeled away as they had come. But surely it would be unreasonable to expect anybody who had been confined to an invalid chair for years to walk with limbs probably wasted by inactivity. Whether his achievements came from a spirit working through him (as he claimed), or whether they were the results of the clever, instinctive manipulation of an intuitive osteopath, I am not prepared to say. But whatever the secret behind his power, Mr. Edwards has remarkable gifts."

Not long afterwards, I was responsible for arranging a dinner to enable his Spiritualist colleagues to pay Edwards the tribute that was due. Hannen Swaffer told of his first meeting with the healer.

"This very nice-looking, pleasant-featured, quiet man made the lame to walk, the deaf to hear and the blind to see," he said. "I particularly remember that evening, for in the gallery there was a woman who had been dumb for years. Without going up in the gallery, Harry Edwards said to her, 'How long is it since

you have spoken?' and the woman replied, 'I haven't spoken for years!'

"That was to my mind, as great a miracle as any recorded in the New Testament. We are not flattering Harry Edwards when we compare his healing with that of the Nazarene. We Spiritualists owe him, of all our healers today, a great debt, for he can go out and prove our case to thousands of people at the same time."

Shaw Desmond declared of Edwards, "He has done more with these public demonstrations to prove to people that there is a world behind this, of which this is only the shadow, than almost anything in Spiritualism."

When Edwards, the guest of honour, replied, he made a short speech, in which he speedily disposed of the oft-quoted suggestion that his cures were achieved by manipulation. "I can tell you that when we manipulate the back," he said, "healing has already taken place. The manipulating we do is to demonstrate that healing has already had effect."

You can judge the way in which the healer's fame was spreading by the fact that I see on the same page of the scrapbook a report of a demonstration at the Bournemouth Pavilion which was attended by two thousand people and hundreds had to be turned away. The chief reporter of the *Bournemouth Times* wrote:

"One case which impressed me was that of a fourteen-month-old baby girl. She was brought on the stage by a young woman who gave me her own name as Miss Morie Manton, Redhill Drive, aunt of the infant, named Eileen.

"Eileen appeared rigid down one side, one of her hands was clenched and slightly deformed. A few moments with Mr. Edwards and Eileen was able to pick up a pencil. She could stand and walk a few steps too. Miss Manton told me afterwards, 'She has never been able to do that before.'

"Then a young woman from Norton Road, Winton, attractively dressed in black, was helped up to the stage. She said she was badly crippled with rheumatoid arthritis (a painful inflam-

mation of the joints with swelling and deformity). Her condition started seven years previously, I was told. Although she felt some pain the young woman was apparently able to relax rigid joints in Mr. Edwards's hands. Then, holding his hands, she stood up and with his help walked a few steps. One of her stockings started to fall down. Mr. Edwards told her about it. 'I can't reach to pull it up,' she said.

" 'Nonsense, of course you can,' replied Mr. Edwards. And she did."

## CHAPTER XII

### WORLD'S LARGEST DEMONSTRATION

IT was advertised as "the world's largest demonstration of psychic healing." The description was justified, I must say, even though it was mine. I organised the meeting to which it referred.

Some time in 1948 it occurred to me that it would be fitting if the largest possible number of people could witness the healing of Edwards. I had been touring the country, addressing propaganda meetings, and discovered that the hall with the largest capacity in England is King's Hall, Belle Vue, Manchester. It has been the scene of many historic occasions when the oratorical powers of our greatest statesmen and the musical genius of the most celebrated artists have been displayed.

I engaged the hall and took pains to see that the event was well advertised. The result was that the meeting attracted tremendous attention. There was a staggering post received by the hall's proprietors from sufferers who were anxious to be treated by the healer on the night, but in each case they had to be told that no prior arrangements could be made, lest Edwards be accused of having confederates. Those who were to be treated would, as usual, be selected from the audience on the night.

The authorities made special arrangements for invalids in bath chairs to be able to witness the proceedings, and Edwards promised to see as many of them as possible after the meeting.

I presided on the night. It was a thrilling spectacle to see the thousands in this hall which, shaped in the form of a circle, was a circus in days gone by. Special arc lights were installed because



a news reel company wished to make a film. Photographers, perched in special observation boxes above the heads of the audience, constantly took pictures by flashlight bulbs. Both the Red Cross and the St. John Ambulance sent representatives so that helpless patients could be aided on to the platform.

There were reporters from almost every newspaper in the surrounding districts. Surprisingly enough, the Press reports were few though the effect of the demonstration on the audience was electrical.

One Lancashire newspaper, which obviously did not know what to make of the proceedings, said that the audience "apparently saw, happening in rapid succession and in an almost casual manner, acts of healing which certainly appeared to have no natural explanation."

The reporter quoted these examples: "A little girl was carried on the stage apparently suffering from curvature of the spine. A man from the audience, who claimed to be a sceptic and a qualified doctor, testified that such a deformity could only be remedied in hospital after several months' painful treatment. After a few seconds of gentle massage, Mr. Edwards requested the doctor to examine the child again, and he said he found the spine perfectly straight.

"Mr. Edwards next worked on the eyes of an almost totally blind man who said he could see to the back of the hall; he manipulated a huge goitre on an old lady's neck till it resembled a mass of loose flesh."

The newspaper mentioned that three hours after the meeting had begun, "the passages of the hall were still crowded with people almost fighting to see Edwards."

*Psychic News*, reporting the meeting, headlined it as: "World's Largest Psychic Healing Meeting.: Over 6,000 See Harry Edwards at Manchester." It began its story with these words:

"The aisles were crowded with stretcher cases and bathchair

patients. Mothers clustered round the platform with children in their arms, waiting for Edwards to begin and it was on healing the children that Edwards concentrated."

A feature of the meeting was the terrific burst of applause that punctuated each healing success. When Edwards announced that he would deal with the adults, there were mothers still crowding to the foot of the platform with children in their arms. The healer asked whether he should continue to treat these youthful sufferers or turn to the grown ups. There was an immediate cry from the audience, "Treat the children!"

As was becoming common at his meetings, there was medical testimony to the effect of his healing. A qualified nurse confirmed that a patient suffering from disseminated sclerosis, resulting in a spastic condition of the spine, had its rigidity removed after a few seconds.

One outstanding case was that of a five-year-old girl, Marilyn Pover, of Leigh, Lancashire, suffering from paralysis of the legs, the left limb being the worst affected. She had been under treatment at an orthopædic hospital for six months and was wearing calipers. "Can she walk without these?" Edwards asked the mother. "No," was the answer. With the calipers removed, the healer's deft fingers moved up and down the child's leg and finally asked her to stand. She did so. Then helped by Edwards, she walked across the platform and back again, and finally down the steps to the floor of the hall.

The mother, interviewed afterwards by a reporter, stated that she had had no previous connection with the Spiritualist movement. This was the first time she had attended such a healing demonstration. The child had not previously been able to walk down any steps since being afflicted and could not walk without the calipers. Still refusing to wear these leg irons, Marilyn, at the end of the meeting, walked up the hall, helped by her mother, who stated that she intended to carry on the treatment if she could find a local healer.

*Psychic News* also published this letter from two people in the audience:

"We were fortunate in finding a taxi outside the main entrance. The taxi driver, an elderly man, described to us the miracles he had seen in the hall. Apparently he had been there a short while, and was so overcome with emotion that he was forced to leave. He had driven a lady and gentleman with their small daughter to the station.

"This child, he said, was healed by Harry Edwards, and had not walked before, and yet on arriving at the station, walked up and down the platform quite normally with her parents. The parents were weeping with joy."

The film, to which sound was added, had a private showing in London before it was released for distribution. The makers of the film, which ran for ten minutes, stated that it had aroused great interest, particularly among people who knew nothing of the subject. When it was shown in Manchester, for example, its run had to be extended for a further week, an unusual happening in a news theatre.

I have already briefly mentioned that the Edinburgh Psychic College kept in touch with the patients who had been treated at its Usher Hall meeting to ascertain whether progress was maintained. It was able to report that, in the majority of cases, there was improvement. A mother stated that her son, whose knee-cap had been removed before Edwards treated him, was in good health and spirits, and could walk without sticks. A shorthand typist, treated for paralysis, said that she felt generally better since the meeting. A little girl, whose head and shoulder were injured by falling stones, was attending school and the improvement had been maintained.

An outstanding case was that of a thirteen-year-old boy, crippled for eight years as a result of an accident to his hand, which also had caused a shock to his nervous system. The parents reported that the boy was coming on by leaps and

bounds, and had never looked back since the demonstration. Professors had told the parents that certain parts of the boy's body would never grow any more, but doctors were puzzled because his feet and legs were growing naturally, and he needed boots two sizes larger. His general health had improved and this was the first winter that he had not had an attack of anything serious.

"You gave us a new outlook on life," the parents reported to the college, adding that their son was about to have the first thrill of his life by going up on a short aeroplane flight, a tremendous change from being wheeled around in a chair.

Northampton was the next town to stage a healing demonstration. Here the *Northampton Independent* records that "gasps of astonishment and resounding applause rose from a crowded audience during an amazing demonstration of psychic healing."

It adds that there were many touching, as well as thrilling, moments, especially during expressions of gratitude. The newspaper reports one woman saying in ecstasy, "Oh, it's wonderful to be able to hear again," while another discarded a stick on which she had leaned for twenty years.

A girl with a fixed spine and muscular atrophy, who had never been able to walk, was able to perform this feat after a very short treatment. A woman doctor, who checked the girl's position before and after the treatment, said the fixed spine had been made supple. A young man, who had suffered from curvature of the spine for thirty years, including ten months in plaster, was speedily relieved of his disability. An almost blind woman was enabled to see.

Shortly afterwards, at the Caird Hall, Dundee, one of the largest meeting places in Scotland, the *Courier and Advertiser* interviewed a woman whose wrists had been locked with arthritis when she arrived at the hall. Half an hour after treatment, she knew there was a vast difference, and showed how she could now move her hands freely.

Seventeen hundred people were present at this meeting and,

according to the newspaper, they came on stretchers, in bath chairs, on sticks and on crutches.

Now the scene moves to Colwyn Bay, where the local newspaper, describing the results as "miracle cures," had this account of the meeting:

"It had to be seen to be believed, that amazing scene at Arcadia, Colwyn Bay, when, on Sunday afternoon, dozens of persons were healed from their infirmities through the ministrations of Mr. Harry Edwards. Sufferers from arthritis, scarcely able to crawl to the platform, with the aid of St. John Ambulance men who lent their ready aid, stood up after a few touches of Mr. Edwards's healing hands, bent their knees, lifted arms which had been powerless for years, and walked (albeit shakily) from the platform. Some descended the steps unaided.

"On several occasions there were bursts of applause, spontaneous and natural, though out of place, for the atmosphere should have been that of wonder and thankfulness. The amazed looks of delight on the faces of some patients restored after suffering for twelve or possibly more years, spoke eloquently of the power of healing, which can only be termed miraculous."

As I turn the pages of the scrapbook, my eye is caught by a whole-page article on Edwards, taken from an illustrated magazine published in Finland, one more example of how the good news concerning his mission was spreading abroad.

You will remember that I referred to the case of Marilyn Pover, who was given treatment at the Belle Vue meeting. The sequel is that, not long afterwards, a Lancashire newspaper published a picture showing the girl swimming, stating that she was already able to cover a length of the baths.

When Edwards returned to Leeds, his visit created a furore. The *Yorkshire Evening Post* sent a reporter, Alfred Taylor, who described how eleven hundred people packed the Salein Central Hall and applications for a further three thousand tickets had to be refused. The reporter wrote:

"Two paralysed men were carried on to the platform by members of the St. John Ambulance Brigade and placed on chairs. Mr. Edwards explained that their condition was supposed to be incurable. He knelt in front of one of the men and put his arms around his body.

" 'I hear that you were born with this complaint,' he said, and rocked the man's body slowly backwards and forwards, bending the spine and slowly massaging the legs.

"Suddenly he stood and told the man to rise. The man struggled; there was some difficulty; he half-lurched, half-staggered to his feet. 'All your life,' said Mr. Edwards, 'you have had to use your body to move your limbs; that is no longer necessary.'

"He taught the man to stand and sit. He taught him to walk. They moved about the platform and half way down the steps, then back on to the platform. This time the man went down the steps alone and back to his seat in the audience. HE COULD WALK."

He was Mr. Jack Crinon, of Bentley Avenue, Heysham, near Morecambe.

The next day, the same reporter visited Pamela Frecgard, a nine-year-old girl, whom he found playing in her garden with a friend and a skipping rope. On the platform, the previous day, Edwards had made her raise her paralysed arm above her head, something she had never been able to do before. He manipulated her partly-crippled foot until she could stand with both heels on the ground. He also lengthened her paralysed leg until it was equal to the sound one.

Pamela demonstrated her improvements to the reporter, Jack Taylor. "A fair summing-up of the case would seem to be that Mr. Edwards had definitely given Pamela relief," he wrote.

Yet on the same day as this report appeared, the *Yorkshire Evening Post* published a leading article under the heading, "The Mystery of Healing," which stated:

"Spirit healing is a highly controversial topic which can cause elation that is sometimes short-lived and envy which is groundless. The week-end gathering at Salem Central Hall, Leeds, described in our columns yesterday by Alfred Taylor, has caused much comment.

"A Mr. Edwards was instrumental in effecting changes in people suffering from various complaints. He is no doctor, but a doctor who was present said: 'People who shouldn't have been able to walk *have* walked. Whether they will be able to walk next week or next month I don't know. I only know what I have seen.'

"Mr. Edwards has his own explanation: 'If healing takes place it is not an act of magic. It is because spirit healing laws are brought to bear.'

"The operative phrase there is 'spirit healing laws.' Is the assumption behind it justified? Why does the spirit need hands? How can it be distinguished from 'animal magnetism'? If it works in these cases why not in all cases? That is to say—does it never fail? If it ever does fail what has happened to those 'laws'? If it never fails why is not the whole world of the suffering and the deformed put to rights at once?

"Such questions reduce the matter to the notion that some persons are vested with special powers. Medical science, however, would still require the full history of all cured cases, and their subsequent course, before it could allow that 'spiritual laws' can intervene in the metabolism and the bone structure of the body. The psychiatric side of medicine is still somewhat speculative.

"But there is a region, that of the priest, where spiritual healing is held to operate. By its very nature it cannot be put to any significant test except that of results. But results are to be judged not by restored cases alone, but by the proportion not restored. That is the missing evidence. It will be time to talk of 'laws' when that data is available."

Edwards replied to the leading article with this letter:

"You observe that healing results are not to be judged by restored cases alone, but by the proportion not restored. I disagree entirely with this view. Does not medical science judge medical treatment by the percentage that are restored? Surely that is the measure of its success.

"In spirit healing we are able to see appreciable success with diseased bodies for whom medical science can do no more and labels them as 'incurable.' "

In view of this newspaper's comments, it is worth recording that it returned to the subject a fortnight later, when its reporter Jack Taylor dealt with the case of Jack Crinnon, who said:

"I am convinced Mr. Edwards did me a lot of good. He did something to my spine when he bent and massaged me, and something seemed to click into place but I felt no pain at all.

"I believe in spiritual healing. I was getting steadily worse. Medical specialists had told me I was incurable. I was losing weight. Now I have regained a stone in weight."

Among the letters from readers was one from a woman who wrote:

"I wonder why so much criticism has been levelled at spiritual healing done through the mediumship of Mr. Harry Edwards. Of course, all the criticisms could be answered, but it would take too long. Your last paragraph states that results are to be judged by the proportion *not* restored. It is surprising that the same level of criticism is not levelled at the medical profession. All healing must be good and should be accepted by all. It was taught in the Gospels and only one of the disciples—St. Luke—was a physician."

It is worth noting that the *Yorkshire Post* another newspaper, published a statement from a reporter who interviewed George Proctor, a man treated by Edwards for spinal curvature two years earlier at Leeds. Proctor had gone to the meeting to pay his tribute to the healing that had lasted two years. "He was



still as straight and square-shouldered as when he left the platform in July 1947," quoted this newspaper. The *Yorkshire Evening Post* also published an account concerning George Proctor, and printed his statement that before he met Edwards for the first time, he had been unable to work for four years. "I could hardly put one leg in front of the other when I went to the demonstration," he said.

"After the treatment he gave me before all the audience, I ran all the way to the bus station. My wife and mates, who were waiting for me at home, were dumbfounded."

Here is another example of a check made to test whether treatments were temporary or lasting.

The Manchester Psychic Research Society, which organised the meeting in its city, set up a healing committee to investigate the results. It stated that Edwards had been particularly successful with patients who had been treated for disseminated sclerosis, arthritis and paralysis. Cases of deafness, although not showing a similar improvement, had maintained the improvement gained as the result of the healer's visit.

## CHAPTER XIII

"AMAZING," SAYS HARLEY STREET SPECIALIST

THE visit paid by Harry Edwards to Paignton caused even more stir than usual. Before he arrived, the *Paignton Observer* devoted two columns to announcing the visit of what it called this "twentieth century healer." Wrote the reporter:

"To some, the name may be familiar, and to others it may be strange, but whether you know him or not, his name is Harry Edwards. He is known to millions as the man with a power—a strange, almost uncanny power of healing.

"So, on Sunday, August 28th, the famous Harry Edwards will give a demonstration of his amazing 'powers' at the Adelphi Theatre, and you will be able to witness for yourself whether these so-called powers are merely a figment of the imagination or not."

After outlining some cures already achieved by Edwards elsewhere, the reporter ended with: "We shall see! Yes, we shall see."

When this reporter wrote his account of the demonstration, he stated that he saw three people who, if they were not cured, were at least immediately improved in health. He mentioned that as he suffered from short sight, he offered himself as a patient, but he met with no success, although two others with a similar affliction reported improvement.

The reporter summed up by saying that, in his opinion, for what it was worth, Edwards was not a healer. "If he was, then he could have cured me. I maintain that he 'cured' those three people by inspiring confidence in them. He made them sure that they could do what they could always do—if only they had the confidence.

"Against that are the people suffering from deafness, blindness, arthritis, etc., who go to these demonstrations full of hope, deceived, or deceiving themselves, into thinking that they can be cured of their ills and afflictions after all medical authorities have turned them away as incurable."

The impressions recorded by the *Paignton News* were in another category. After using in its headline the statement that a Harley Street specialist found the results amazing, its reporter stated:

"When I set out to see Mr. Harry Edwards, the famous Spiritualist healer, at work at the Adelphi Theatre, Paignton, on Sunday, I was very doubtful of his powers; when I left, I was half convinced.

"The case that impressed me most was that of Mr. M. J. Batten, of Kingsbridge, who, bomb-blasted in the first world war, had never been since able to raise his arms above his head.

"In a few moments Mr. Edwards had traced the injury to his spine, and, holding his hands for a short time over the injured spot, he slowly lifted Mr. Batten's arms high in the air. It seemed a complete cure, and Mr. Batten, who for years had been unable to comb his hair, demonstrated to me afterwards that his limbs were as good as new.

"Did he feel any sensation? Well, this is what Mr. Batten told me, 'I didn't feel any pain at all, but when he pressed his hands over the injured part of my back there was a feeling rather like an electric shock.'

"First patient was tiny Jennifer Moore, aged about four or five, who could not walk because, her mother said, of a form of paralysis. This again Mr. Edwards diagnosed as a spinal injury. He showed the audience a curve in her spine which only took a few seconds to straighten, and he soon had Jennifer strongly pushing his hands away with her legs and holding his hands, walking across the stage amid a burst of applause.

"A man suffering from a form of sclerosis, causing his spine

to be locked solid, burst into a flood of tears as smiling Mr. Edwards, after feeling his back, asked him to bend over on his hand. He was soon turning his back quite freely.

"A retired Harley Street specialist, Dr. Laura McConnel, who was invited on to the stage, confirmed Mr. Edwards's diagnosis. The effect, she said, was 'amazing.'"

This newspaper also featured the treatment received by Mr. Cecil L. Cox, an engineering lecturer at South Devon Technical College, who stated that he was on the road to recovery from an injury which had made him a partial cripple from a motoring accident fifteen years earlier. He told the newspaper:

"There is no doubt that Mr. Edwards has corrected a curvature of my spine. Due to my accident, I wear a calliper, and for some years my back has been curved.

"I went to the meeting with quite an open mind, and was delighted to have the chance of receiving treatment. Mr. Edwards has been successful in 'ironing out' the crook in my neck, which was causing me much anxiety and restriction of movement. At the same time, I quite realise that it is now up to me to do my utmost to prevent it slipping back.

"Mr. Edwards admitted quite frankly that chronic cases needed time to adjust themselves, but both I and a colleague from the college, who was with me, were most impressed with what he did—not only to me but to others."

What a Welsh newspaper described as the deeply moving story of a nine-year-old child, is recorded a few pages later in the scrapbook. Here is the newspaper's account:

"About four years ago, Delyth Jones, Greenfield Street, Penygraig, became a victim of coeliac, the disease which prevents normal growth. Unable to eat fats as a result of war-time restrictions, Delyth went to Cardiff Infirmary about two years ago just a shadow of a seven-year-old child. Despite plasma treatment, Delyth lost her hair, her sight became impaired, and she weighed well under two stones.

"Yet on Tuesday, September 20th, Delyth celebrated her ninth birthday. She looked the picture of health and her weight was three stones eleven pounds.

"The girl whom the doctors gave a hundred-to-one-chance has survived all the complications arising from coeliac by sheer faith and courage.

"Mrs. Janet Jones, her mother, told our reporter: 'Before it was discovered Delyth had coeliac, she had a misplaced heart. To enable her heart to return to its normal position, she lay in bed for three months. The first month she lay flat on her back without pillows; the second month she had one pillow to rest her head on, and during the third month we placed two pillows under her head. In the second month it was found out she had coeliac.

"Swollen arms and feet, wet beri-beri, and paralysis of the arms, were some of the complications which Delyth had from the disease.

"When she returned from Cardiff Infirmary, Delyth had a relapse and Mrs. Jones stated she was in such terrific pain with paralysis of the arms that she could not hold a book. That was the only time her mother heard her complain. She said, 'Why does Jesus Christ let me suffer so? Have I sinned?' In sheer desperation Mrs. Jones wrote to Mr. Harry Edwards. When Mrs. Jones told the medical man attending Delyth this, he said, 'Faith sometimes achieves what medical science cannot accomplish.'

"Mr. Edwards replied and for weeks his Tuesday morning letters were a tonic for Delyth, who has not yet had another relapse.

"Although the world is so much brighter today for the girl with the faith to live, nobody can yet say she is definitely cured. But Delyth and her mother are convinced she will be. They have the faith that moves mountains and cures disease."

Because of the success attending the Bell Vue demonstration,

I repeated the experiment a year later. This resulted in one of the most impressive demonstrations of psychic healing I have ever witnessed. I quote the words of a reporter: "Harry Edwards surpassed his previous efforts and the applause from the large crowd was warm and generous. The sceptics were there; and went away confounded, at a loss to explain what they had seen."

The healer's greatest triumph was with a four-year-old child who had suffered from infantile paralysis since birth. He had never been able to walk properly in his life. His father stated that the child had always to come downstairs backwards and on his hands, and all his walking was done with a wobble. Hospital treatment had proved ineffective.

In a matter of seconds Edwards straightened the spine that was curved as a result of the disease. Then, after a few seconds of treatment on the child's legs, he was able to walk without a wobble. Holding the healer's hand, the child walked quite normally down the steps of the platform and back again. The father's comment was one word, "Amazing."

It was the *Southern Weekly News* which used the word "remarkable" to describe the demonstration that was given at Horsham. Said the newspaper: "Six months ago the future looked pretty grim for three-year-old Richard Gardner of Hurst Road, Horsham, crippled with the after-effects of infantile paralysis and unable to walk.

"That was until he saw Mr. Harry Edwards, Britain's leading psychic healer, at a demonstration at Littlehampton, when, under the magic influence of the healer's hands he took his first two halting steps.

"At Horsham this week in the crowded Drill Hall, Richard's parents brought him to see the healer again, and this time he was able to walk unaided across the platform."

His parents told a reporter: "Six months ago, the surgeon said he would never walk. Now he has changed his mind and said he definitely will walk." Richard removed any doubts

from the minds of those who watched as he shouted: "Look, I can walk! I can walk!" and toddled without any assistance from his surgical iron, across the entrance hall.

The *Sussex County Times* was equally as surprised by the healing demonstration. The editor prefaced a reporter's account by saying that he had instructed a journalist, without prejudice or special briefing, to report the facts as she found them. The result was the following:

"Whether they thought there was 'anything in it' or not, Horsham people—and others from as far away as Brighton—attended in considerable numbers to fill the Drill Hall when a demonstration of spiritual healing had been arranged.

"There were some who had come out of curiosity, there were the sceptics, the open-minded, and there were some—a few were in wheel chairs, some had darkened glasses, a number had crutches, and there were many walking-sticks—who had come because they were in need.

"Affected and locked joints appeared to be unlocked in a matter of seconds after slight pressure with the fingers.

"Commenting on Mr. Edwards's demonstration, a practising Horsham osteopath who had observed some of the patients before and after treatment, said: 'Changes certainly took place, and the changes were very rapid. From a physical standpoint, Mr. Edwards's methods were sound.' "

Soon afterwards I was asked by the Editor of *Tit-Bits* to write two articles on the healer's powers. I will not quote from the first, because it summarises what has already appeared in the book. It is worth mentioning, though, that this article was reprinted in New Zealand, India and Greece, with the result that thousands more letters poured into Edwards seeking his aid for their ailments.

The second article explained how absent healing works. The Editor was intrigued by this phenomenon, and wanted me to describe the processes involved. This is what I wrote:

"You must appreciate that Edwards himself does not heal. He is only the transmitting agent for spirit doctors. The absent healing succeeds because of the attunement, based on many years' development, between these doctors in the Beyond and Edwards.

"This attunement is now so natural a process that he can make contact almost at any time. By this means the spirit doctors receive his thoughts, details of the patient's illness and the request for healing. Every one of the letters he gets weekly is read by Edwards. He regards each as a human document and answers them all personally.

"Because of his degree of attunement, the spirit doctors get a picture of the patient's condition as the letters are read. The process is repeated when the healer dictates his replies by dictaphone, late at night, or in the small hours, when all is quiet and nothing can interfere with the attunement process.

"For new patients, and those seriously ill, a special 'intercession' follows in which Edwards mentally reviews each case with his spirit co-operators."

The scene changes to Bradford where, according to the *Yorkshire Observer*, "there were expressions of surprise and joy mixed with a few tears as persons found they could move limbs which had been locked or been very stiff for years." The newspaper added "that many people who had not been able to use certain limbs for years were able to leave the stage unaided after being assisted there.

"One young woman came to Mr. Edwards with a curved spine which had been like that for ten years. She walked from the stage unassisted, with her shoulders pulled back and her back erect."

This report occupied just under five inches and its brevity caused a reader to complain. His letter, printed under the heading, "Faith Healing Report" and signed "Imprimatur," stated: "On Sunday last I sat for three hours at a Bradford



meeting watching Mr. Harry Edwards, a Spiritualist healer, making the lame walk, hunchbacks straight, and removing goitres as easily as a hop picker picks hops.

"Over 1,000 people watched this miracle man perform works of mercy and healing, and when he asked for a doctor to examine the patients before and after treatment no medical man was present, as there was no response to the appeal. Perhaps they were not interested in the loosening of arthritis-locked joints, straightening of hunchbacks, or the rapid dispersal of enlarged thyroid glands.

"But what struck me very forcibly was the fact that it took me quite a while to find the report of this meeting in Monday's *Yorkshire Observer*. Your valuation of this man's healing work was such that you gave it five inches of space, exactly the same as you gave to the play, *The Zeal of Thy House*, which was performed in the Cathedral before 500 people.

"If Mr. Edwards's healing had taken place in the Cathedral and Dorothy L. Sayers's play performed in the Carlton Cinema it would have been front-page matter, but Mr. Edwards is a Spiritualist. Therein lies the difference. No wonder the churches are empty."

To this the Editor appended a footnote: "Our correspondent is wrong in imputing any bias in our news treatment of the faith-healing meeting. The real point is that, although there may be individual cases in which a faith-healer appears to benefit a patient, the whole process is not scientifically proven and must be treated with reserve. No one would rejoice more than ourselves if unfortunate sufferers were *really* being cured permanently—but are they? A permanent cure is vastly different from an apparent and temporary improvement under the emotional stimulus of a mass meeting."

This footnote was too much for readers. The newspaper must have had many letters of complaint. It printed three of them. The first was from a woman who wrote:

"I would like to say that I myself was a sufferer from rheumatoid arthritis, and was given at Bradford Royal Infirmary all the treatment known, and then told that nothing more could be done for me. I reached the stage when to move was agony and to get from one chair to another was an ordeal, until three years ago I had treatment from Mr. Edwards in Leeds.

"From that day to this, I have never touched a stick to get about with, and can do all my own work at home and shopping. Life has taken a new turn for me. I am not concerned how it was done. The fact remains that I was healed not last Sunday but three years ago, and that can hardly be called emotional stimulus of a mass meeting."

The second was from "Imprimatur": "With your usual dexterity you try to convey to your readers the idea that the Spiritualist healing meeting in question was in the same category as the faith healing of the orthodox churches.

"Ask your reporter if he saw any hysteria, mass or otherwise. Quietly and with great confidence, Mr. Edwards carried on his great work in the calm and peaceful atmosphere which prevailed. One could have heard a pin drop during the healing, which was only disturbed by the voice of the healer talking to the patient. Between times a profound silence reigned. After the cure was completed the audience broke into a round of applause.

"Do you deny that the cure of the Leeds man mentioned in your report was not permanent? He was cured in three minutes—after being in most of the hospitals in Yorkshire, and had not worked for four years. The orthodox medical men could do nothing for him. Can you explain to your readers how infants cured by Mr. Edwards can have the faith you think is the cause of the impermanent cures?"

The third made these comments: "In your reply to 'Imprimatur's' letter you show the customary lack of knowledge of, or dismissal of, a universal law. The reason why Mr. Edwards conducts such meetings is so that people may see for themselves—

see that there is a power which the medical profession will not scientifically prove, nor, except in individual cases, co-operate with.

"'Faith Healing' is your heading. Faith in whom? It is not faith, it is giving doctors, now in spirit—with their greater knowledge—the opportunity to exercise it.

"Surely you will admit that the Leeds man's spine is permanently cured (he was there for all to see); it is three years since it was straightened through Mr. Edwards. Sir, if you and others in prominent positions would only quietly investigate a little, what a different world you could make!"

You may recall that I mentioned some comments made in the *People*, and promised to return to this newspaper. I have already indicated my view of Press inquiries, and the one conducted by the *People* followed the usual strange behaviour. It was entitled, "Into the Unknown," and was supposed to be "the most important inquiry into the world beyond by experts who witnessed psychic tests."

The panel of "experts" was a mixed bag, containing some who knew a little about psychic matters and others who knew nothing. How an individual could become an expert on a subject to which he had only given a few weeks of attention was a mystery that the *People* never solved.

Anyway, to give you one example of how "the most important inquiry ever made into the world beyond" was conducted, I must tell you what happened when Edwards was invited to attend. Naturally, the sole reason for his being present was to demonstrate his gift of healing. But the newspaper omitted the rather elementary precaution of having any patients there for him to treat.

When he arrived, he asked for the patients, and because there were none he had to do his best with members of the panel and their friends who wanted treatment. You will be amused at the comments by the "experts." A surgeon, who was a member of

the panel, said that the healer's diagnosis in one case was impressive, though he questioned any permanent cure. This opinion was at least premature, because the question of permanency could not be proved until years had elapsed. Anyway, the surgeon stated that Edwards possessed strong hands, manipulated his patients vigorously and exerted a strong force of suggestion that his patients would get well.

Canon Marcus Knight, of St. Paul's Cathedral, could not understand why the healer called in the hypothesis of departed spirits. "His gift arises out of his own personality, although its source may lie elsewhere," was his verdict.

As the whole story of Edwards is evidence of the work of "departed spirits," who told him about his gift in the first place, and then helped him to develop it, this makes nonsense of the canon's "expert" opinion.

L. A. G. Strong, the well-known novelist, was most impressed, and said that the healer's powers seemed to be beyond dispute, but he preferred to pass an open verdict on its source. "I am ready to believe he is a focus of healing powers not yet understood by orthodox medical science," he said.

There are several newspaper reports of the healer's visit to Littlehampton. They all feature the case of Miss Dorothy Thearle, of Worthing, who went to the meeting bent double with spinal curvature. Less than two hours later, she left, walking erect, with her shoulders thrown back. Miss Thearle told the reporters that she had suffered from her affliction for forty years. "It is wonderful," she said. "I cannot wait to get home to see myself in the mirror."

Now the Press cuttings book shows a constant succession of spontaneous healings. To record them in detail would mean to transform this from a book into a tome.

The fame of Edwards has preceded him, and audiences and editors expect to see "miracles."

The *South London Observer* features in its headlines that a

crippled boy was able to run after healing, and had discarded his leg-iron to play football. This refers to a demonstration at which Edwards treated a ten-year-old boy crippled for seven years by the after effects of infantile paralysis. Yet after ten minutes' treatment, he ran down the steps of the platform, followed by his mother carrying the leg-iron he had worn on and off for five years.

"Many of the audience of five hundred regarded it as a miracle of healing," says the journalist, who made the point that "there were no dimmed lights, solemn invocations or mumbo-jumbo."

When he went to see the boy the next day, the lad met him in the street, caught him by the hand and made him run to his home so quickly that he had to ask him to slow down. The reporter saw him play football in the street with his three brothers, kicking the ball across the road with his "bad" foot.

Then, at Manchester, the *City News* tells how two thousand people applauded the demonstration which a reporter described as "one of the most moving and memorable afternoons anybody could ever experience."

The scene changes to Jersey, where the *Morning News* talks of Edwards as a "shirt-sleeved 'miracle healer' who gave a packed town hall audience overwhelming and dramatic evidence of his amazing power to cure life-long cripples after only a few minutes' treatment. Cripples deformed since birth, invalids who had never before in their lives been able to walk upright, people confined for years in wheel chairs without hope of ever being able to walk again, left the stage on their feet after only a brief interview with Harry Edwards.

"The audience gasped, then applauded as one by one sufferers from arthritis, spinal diseases, paralysis and semi-blindness came away from the hall visibly cured by the man who has astounded the world by the magic power in his hands."

Now we reach an important milestone in the healer's career—the receipt of his millionth letter since starting at Burrows Lea.

As he had been there for four-and-a-half years when this letter was received, it meant that the average was two letters per minute. The letter came from Mrs. Harriet Watkins, of 59, Bloxhall Road, East London, who wrote:

"I am pleased to say that my sister-in-law May Randall is much better, and so is her husband, Fred.

"Audrey Gibbons is also very well and I am pleased to say she is still working. We are all happy to know that God gave the power to you and your dear spirit healers to help her when we knew she was so very ill. Now she looks the picture of health.

"I must tell you that she did not know about the absent healing. It was through my mother who was so upset at hearing she was so ill that I wrote and asked you for help.

"I am very much better myself, and I wish to thank you for helping my husband Sidney.

"God bless you in all your work."

Naturally, the fact that Edwards had received a million letters meant more Press publicity, and accounts appeared in several national newspapers.

The cuttings record demonstrations at Worthing, where a man who had suffered with arthritis in the hip for over eight years—three of them had been spent in hospital—was so delighted with the treatment that he left the platform waving in the air the two sticks with which he had hobbled on to the platform. They tell of his demonstration at Colchester, where the *Essex County Telegraph* refers to his "magic touch" which produces such surprising healing results. They refer to his meeting at Chester, where a woman suffering from Parkinson's Disease, who had been unable to walk, left the demonstration to walk down a steep hill to place flowers on her husband's grave.

They include a long letter published in the *British Weekly*, the religious journal, from Herbert E. Wiseman, who answered a

clergyman's statement that "so-called healing miracles had ceased about the end of the first century." Wiseman, in describing the work of Edwards, concludes, "Many of us Christians have still to learn the lesson conveyed by St. Peter's vision that God 'has no favourites,' ignores creedal distinctions, and bestows His psychical gifts upon whomsoever He will."

Here on the next page is an article from the London *Star*, which, in dealing with Spiritualism, refers to Harry Edwards as "to-day's outstanding 'healer.'"

On the next page there is a report from the Blackpool *Evening Gazette* telling how nearly two thousand people crowded into a theatre to witness the demonstration.

And here is a letter in *Truth* in which the writer, contributing to a discussion on unorthodox cures, points out that if people would only "investigate the work of Harry Edwards, who can *painlessly* correct lifelong malformations in a few minutes, they would realise why many sufferers have ceased to believe in orthodox 'healing,' with its surgical mutilations, and drugs that cure one disease only to bring another in its place."

We reach another landmark in the career of Edwards, the holding of a healing demonstration in London's newly built Royal Festival Hall. This attracted a capacity audience of over three thousand people and also the attention of national newspapers. All the tickets for the meeting were sold out two weeks beforehand. In a preliminary account, the *Sunday Dispatch* mentions that famous peers, M.P.s, doctors and clergymen had bought tickets.

There are reports of the meeting in the *Daily Mirror*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Daily Mail*, *Daily Graphic*, *Nottingham Journal*, *Yorkshire Post*, *Belfast News-Letter*, *Nottingham Guardian*, *Daily Record and Mail*, and even in the far-away *Bombay Sunday Standard*. Mostly, the accounts are sympathetic, and reference to the gasps of astonishment and applause as men and women who had been painfully aided to the platform left with brisker steps, all ap-

parently improved, and in some cases carrying their walking-sticks.

The *Daily Mail* printed a large picture of a three-year-old boy, who, because of the healing, was able to walk for the first time. *Picture Post* devoted a two-page spread of illustrations to its account. These photographs show a young girl whose paralysed body was able to move again, a woman whose leg joints were painlessly freed and a child who was able to see clearly for the first time.

The accompanying article was quite fair in its comments, and stressed that the results were achieved by a "simple laying-on of hands." The reporter stated that the demonstration was impressive, though he struck a note of caution by adding that he did not know how permanent the results would be.

Edwards was described as "short, sturdy, and un-Messianic. Un-ascetic and un-aesthetic in appearance, he is perhaps one of the least spectacular instruments of unusual grace that ever amazed or antagonised his fellow-creatures. Yet although, possibly because, he is resolutely prosaic (almost sensationally, one might say, without 'side'), and abhors what he calls 'fatuous egoism,' he is the centre of an adoring cult. Some people naturally argue that he is himself symptomatic of a contemporary disease—a lack of 'true' faith that is anxious to believe anything. That he deceptively fills a spiritual vacuum. That he's a hoax. That he battens profitably on desperation. He is often a last resort of desperation—that of the chronic invalid, the person interminably tinkered with and finally abandoned.

"But go and watch him. Listen to his confident, proselytising questions: 'How many years have you been like this? The doctors have given you up?' Then, minutes later, hear him reason: 'If so much can be achieved in so short a time, there must be a force at work greater than the doctors and the hospitals.' You may go to jeer, and stay, if not to cheer, then at least to think again."



## CHAPTER XIV

### "ANTHOLOGY OF MIRACLES"

THE high-water mark in the national press publicity accorded to Edwards was reached in November 1951, when the *Sunday Chronicle* devoted several issues to his healing. It began when Beverley Nichols made what he called "A Pilgrim's Progress 1951," and examined the claims of the varying modern religions. Inevitably he had to include Spiritualism, and inevitably he had to feature spirit healing, which is the most prominent activity of the Spiritualist movement today.

In announcing that Beverley Nichols was inquiring into the activities of Edwards, the *Sunday Chronicle* referred to the healer as the man "like a great light," whose mail is an "anthology of miracles." It also stated that the healer's hands "are guided by a supernatural power," but this is not accurate. Edwards has never claimed anything supernatural about his healing, because he realises that there cannot be anything greater than natural law. What he has stated is that the healing is supernormal.

The newspaper devoted a whole page to Beverley Nichols's visit to Burrows Lea. In the introduction to his article, it was stated that in all his journeys, for Nichols had travelled up and down the country as part of his modern pilgrim's progress, he had "found no territory like the House of the Miracle Healer." Edwards was described as the "man who has magic in his hands."

There were two photographs illustrating the article, one showing Edwards treating a patient in the Sanctuary, the other depicting a group waiting for treatment, some very old and sick, some with tears in their eyes, this second picture being captioned, "Waiting for Miracles."

Nichols described Burrows Lea as a "house of magic" in a quiet village lane in Surrey. The Sanctuary, itself, he said was a simple room half-way between a doctor's consulting room and a private chapel. Two or three rows of chairs were drawn up to face a long oak table, on which there stood a symbolic image made of a plastic material from the cockpit of a Stirling bomber—a cross surmounted by a circle. This symbol was Edwards's modern version of converting the sword into a ploughshare.

When the door of the Sanctuary opened and Edwards came in followed by three white-coated assistants, Nichols said he felt "an instantaneous elevation of the spirit. The man was luminous with health. Not that there was anything aggressive or 'hearty' about him; it was a quality of light; his entry into the room had been like the drawing up of a blind."

In spite of the healer's white hair, said the writer, he looked about forty, though he was then fifty-seven. He specifically referred to the healer's "blue eyes of piercing clarity, a very clear skin, and a winning smile."

The first case was not sensational. It was an elderly man, suffering from thrombosis, who had seen Edwards three weeks previously and had returned for a check-up before sailing home to South Africa. This man stated that the terrible pain had gone from his heart and his blood pressure was nearly normal.

When Edwards asked if he was aware that he had a clot when he first came, the man nodded and said the doctors had told him so. "Well, it is gone," said the healer, making a sweeping gesture across the chest, "and it won't return." Then Edwards wished him good-bye, told him not to overdo things and hoped he would have a good trip.

"It was as simple as all that," wrote Nichols. Although this case was not sensational, it was mentioned, he said, because he wanted to present a clear, factual report. He declared that the patient was obviously a man of intelligence, and here he was

testifying that the mere passing of Edwards's hand had lowered his blood pressure and removed a long-standing, acute pain. Now the healer had added that the clot had also been dispersed. While there was no medical evidence of this fact, in the light of what he was about to witness, said Nichols, he would not be inclined to doubt it.

The next patient was a middle-aged Negro, whom the writer had noticed when he came in because he was obviously in pain and having difficulty in lifting his head. The patient explained that for ten years he had suffered such pain in his abdomen that often he could not hold up his head. When Edwards stretched out his hand, the Negro flinched. "I shan't hurt you," said the healer, who rested his hand on the man's stomach. As he did so Nichols watched the healer's face. He said it had a strange expression, as though he was listening for something. Although the fingers were moving, they seemed hardly to belong to Edwards.

In all the treatments he observed that afternoon, there was always this sense of listening. It was as though Edwards had a telephone receiver at his ear and a voice spoke to him from a great distance.

After about thirty seconds, Edwards lifted his hand from the abdomen to the neck. He made a few swift gestures and said briskly, "Well, that did not take long." The Negro stared at him with his huge mouth gaping. Tentatively he pushed a finger into his stomach and began to grin. As he pushed harder, the grin spread over his countenance. The healer urged him to try to hurt himself. Though he slapped his stomach, he said he could feel no pain. Swiftly, Edwards gave him a sharp punch, but there was no wincing. Instead, the Negro giggled delightedly and exclaimed that it did not hurt.

This all happened so swiftly, according to Nichols, that it had the quality of an illusion. Yet a glance at the patient's face showed that it was etched with the pain of years.

Next came a pretty child of about five, led by her mother.

The girl walked oddly, as though her feet did not altogether belong to her. While she climbed on to a chair, the mother tearfully explained that, despite four years of hospital treatment, the doctors had stated that the child's legs must be put into irons.

"She was born with this of course," said the healer. The mother nodded agreement. Edwards turned to Nichols and asked him to feel the child's foot. When he was met with hesitancy, he assured Nichols that he would not hurt the girl. The reporter stretched out his hand and held the foot, closing his fingers round it. It was cool and white and small, but it felt as though there was a block of wood inside it.

Then the healer took the foot and gently stroked it. There was nothing so drastic as manipulation or even massage. It was more the kind of thing you would do to comfort a child who had bruised herself.

After ten seconds of this treatment, Edwards asked Nichols to feel the foot. The reporter closed his fingers round it once more. "It was difficult to believe that it was the same foot," he wrote, "all the stiffness had gone; it was as supple as a willow twig."

Before he had time to make any comments, Edwards, who had been gently stroking the other foot, told the mother with a smile that she need not worry any more about those irons. Then he turned to the child and said, "Now jump down and stand on your toes." The child jumped down, paused for a moment and then lifted herself on her toes. She did this without any effort and with no sign of pain but "naturally and gayly with the legs straight as an arrow and the arches erect."

By now, stated Nichols, he was, to put it mildly, impressed. So were all the other people present. Some had tears in their eyes. The healer, however, remained calm and matter of fact throughout it all. There was no hint of a "theatrical gesture, nor a syllable of mystical patter." When Nichols suggested that this was a miracle, Edwards merely shrugged his shoulders. He made no claims to do the impossible and gave no promises in

advance that any patients would be cured. In the next case, for example, he stressed that he could do little.

This was an old lady, nearing ninety, who hobbled in on two sticks. She was almost bent double with rheumatoid arthritis and took so long getting across the room, even with the help of two assistants, that the healer had time to explain to Nichols before she was close enough to hear him. Edwards said that there was practically nothing left for him to work on because the shell of her body was worn so thin and grown so brittle that a breath of wind would crack it. All he could do was to give her a bit of warmth and comfort. But he did more than that, even though her arms were stiff and her hands like gnarled roots.

The woman said it was a bore because she could not move her arms to do her hair. After three minutes of making passes down her spine, the healer said, "Well, you can do your hair now." The thin arms were raised of their own accord to the grey wisps of hair. As the knotted fingers patted them, she smiled and nodded.

Nichols stressed once again that there was no suggestion of manipulation in the healer's treatment. If Edwards had been achieving these results by a kind of super-osteopathy it would have been remarkable, but it would not have been magical, and that was a word from which it was impossible for him to escape.

The next case was a woman suffering from an advanced spinal curvature. At the healer's invitation, Nichols placed the palm of his hand in the centre of the spine where it bulged to the left in a kind of arc. It needed no knowledge of anatomy to realise that the spine was grossly misshapen. After a treatment lasting one minute, which consisted of gentle movements of the healer's hands over her back. Edwards asked Nichols to feel the spine again.

"It was as straight as a ruler," said the writer. "One would have said that only a surgical operation or the prolonged use of brute force could have achieved such a transformation."

Because he stated that accounts of miracles could become monotonous, Nichols contented himself with only one more example.

This was a woman who obviously was in deep distress and afflicted by years of suffering. She was a victim of a perpetual pain in her back, a gastric ulcer and an acute sinus which had been completely blocked for eight years. The healer dealt swiftly with the first two troubles and then asked how many times they had operated for the sinus affliction. "Three," was the answer. Edwards stretched out his hand and stroked her face and then said, "Now breathe." The woman took a deep breath.

Nichols heard the long, steady intake of air through the normal channels of the nose, the first time the woman had breathed properly for eight years. It seemed one of the strangest signs he had ever heard. When the woman rose to return to her seat, she was still breathing normally. Her features were radiant, and she had come back to life.

At the end of the healing session, which had lasted nearly three hours, Nichols accompanied Edwards to his study for a cup of tea. The healer asked him to remember that the great majority of the people who came to him had been given up as incurable. Most of their work was done by absent healing, because it would be physically impossible for him to be personally present at every case of healing. He mentioned that they had received their millionth letter that week—the millionth letter in four years.

Nichols asked if absent healing was effective. Edwards pushed a portfolio across the desk which quoted five hundred cases of "incurable" cancer which had been healed by their intervention in the last four years. Many of these cases were attested by qualified medical evidence. Nichols took the folder away and began to study it. He called it an "anthology of miracles."

The easiest way of stating the method by which Edwards thought the absent healing was conducted, he wrote, was his

statement that he was controlled by various doctors in the spirit world who used him as a channel for the unlimited healing resources of the Infinite.

What impressed him was the business-like and rational way in which the Sanctuary was run, especially the vast correspondence, which then totalled 3,500 letters a week, all of it being carefully read and annotated. He added, without wishing to appear flippant, that the services of spirit doctors were taken as much for granted as if they were members of the resident staff. But whichever way you looked at it, you were confronted by a miracle, he said. If the psychic interpretation was rejected, there was still the healing of multitudes of "incurables" to be explained away.

Nichols bade the healer good-bye and headed for home. It was a lovely evening and he felt it would be pleasant to stop at an inn, drink a glass of beer and scribble a few notes.

The barman asked if he had been to the Sanctuary. When Nichols answered yes, he commented, "Makes you think, doesn't it? All the same," he added, "if you want the real proof, you don't want to go to the Sanctuary, but to the station at Dorking."

This puzzled Nichols, but the barman explained that if he talked to the porters he would have his proof. The porters saw them come and go, and sometimes found it hard to believe that they were the same people.

"The Dorking porters must have an interesting job," wrote Nichols. "But I have no need to call their evidence; I had seen it myself."

The following week, there was an article by Hilde Marchant, saying that the Sanctuary had been besieged as a result of Beverley Nichols's article. Patients who were sick and desperate had come by car, coach and crutches. By post, over 7,000 letters had been sent, many of them addressed simply to "Harry Edwards, a quiet country lane in Surrey," the only address given

by Nichols. The letters pleaded and beseeched, and Edwards took them all as patients. So, through the *Sunday Chronicle*, wrote Hilde Marchant, Edwards "becomes a healer with what must be the country's largest practice." Many of the patients travelled long distances from Ireland, Scotland and North of England.

There was a lot more, she added, that she wanted to know about this man, of whom such bold and persistent claims were made. The *Sunday Chronicle* had commissioned her to find out and had promised to publish her findings. She felt that miracle cures, despite what Beverley Nichols had written, had to be taken with a grain of salt. She was prepared to take the grain of salt, and Edwards did not seem to mind her inquiries.

The one thing that struck her on her first meeting with him was that he had no fear of people who wanted the facts. "Come any time you like and there is no need to tell us in advance," was his open invitation. He offered the names of doctors and clergymen who had received evidence of his powers.

She had seen him in his "prosaic business-like study surrounded by helpers, typewriters and files, meeting every challenge," and he was convincingly confident.

For the next few weeks she was going to search deeply into the life of Edwards—"the man who shatters orthodoxy and for whom claims of miracles were made."

The *Sunday Chronicle* had promised to publish the uncensored results of her search. From the many thousands of letters received by the *Sunday Chronicle*, she mentioned the case of one woman who had suffered for years from a goitre in her neck. One doctor wanted her to have it removed by an operation, while another advised her to leave it alone unless it became painful. Edwards merely stroked it gently. The woman felt slight heat and vibration from his fingers. Then he said, "It has gone." It had, and it had never returned. When the woman told the doctor about her visit to the healer, he said, "Well, anyway, it has gone."



## CHAPTER XV

### "THE MIRACLE HEALER"

THE *Sunday Chronicle* decided to go all out in its presentation of Hilde Marchant's report. It utilised all the resources of modern publicity, realising that it was a story of great human interest, which would also help to increase its circulation.

Large advertisements appeared in many newspapers and there were huge posters on hoardings up and down the country.

The trickle had now become a flood, so far as Edwards was concerned. From obscurity in Balham, the power of the spirit had raised him up to a figure who was known throughout Britain and in countries beyond the seas.

The fulmination from ignorant clergymen and the rebuke from the Archbishop of Canterbury could not stem his progress, simply because the sick went where they could be healed. In this, there is an object lesson and an encouragement to all who labour to serve the needy.

Let us return to the *Sunday Chronicle*. In her preliminary article, Hilde Marchant wrote:

"Two weeks after the story of Harry Edwards, the miracle healer, was told in the *Sunday Chronicle* by Beverley Nichols, readers have submitted evidence of his remarkable powers.

"Already those who got in touch with him only fourteen days ago are reporting bewildering changes from sickness to health.

"It is bewildering because mostly the contact with Mr. Edwards has involved no more than a stamp. He has then undertaken absent healing. I present these letters without comment.

"From Heckmondwike, Yorks, a husband wrote about his wife. For a long time she has suffered from an extremely painful disease. Now he says that she has no great pain and that her

mental outlook has entirely changed. The wonder of it is past comprehension.

"Through the *Sunday Chronicle* a woman got in touch with Mr. Edwards because of her backward child. Her letter is most moving and obviously not written lightly. It comes from Ecclesall, Sheffield, and says the child is now vitality itself. She plays happily and goes to bed and sleeps peacefully.

"'I am overjoyed and eagerly looking ahead to the future, a thing I have not dared to do for years—it seemed obscure and unhappy. But now there is great hope.'

"There are many others. A wife wrote on behalf of her husband's deafness from Pendlebury, Lancashire, and says quite simply, that last Sunday her husband's hearing was getting better and that she no longer had to shout. A wife from Harrow, Middlesex, reports that her husband, suffering from an acute internal disease, has enjoyed his first solid meal for months. A reader in Warwick who was suffering from hardened arteries, and was said to be incurable, reports a vast change in her ability to get around her home.

"These and many other cases I shall investigate. I have already seen Mr. Edwards at work. The full assessment of these things and of this man, who in a seemingly casual way accomplishes so much, will be told in the *Sunday Chronicle* shortly."

A few weeks later, the Editor of the *Sunday Chronicle* announced on the front page "another remarkable story, a full report on Harry Edwards, the spirit healer. This, he said, had been specially prepared because of the tremendous interest aroused by Beverley Nichols when he wrote about Edwards."

As a preface to her report, Hilde Marchant wrote:

"Whatever else may be said or believed about Harry Edwards, one fact is undeniable: this stocky, silver-haired man of fifty-seven, is one of the most remarkable personalities living today.

"Harry Edwards calls himself a 'spirit healer.' He is recog-

nised by thousands of awe-stricken patients with a devotion that borders on idolatry. Equally, he is regarded by sceptics—among them eminent members of the medical profession—as a master of mass-suggestion, who has yet to prove that he has accomplished a lasting 'cure.'

"Between these two viewpoints lies the truth. I have spent hours talking with Edwards himself. I have questioned and cross-questioned past and present patients, sifting the mass of extraordinary testimony which has been placed before me—with no prompting from Edwards himself. I have watched him at work on public platforms and in the privacy of his magnificent house, set in an estate at Shere in Surrey.

"With frankness and honesty Edwards answered my most searching questions."

In the next issue, the first of five consecutive articles that comprised her report, the newspaper printed what it called "Chapter One in the amazing exclusive story of the greatest enigma of our time." There were two photographs of Edwards, one showing the white-coated healer at his Sanctuary, and the other the printer who fought as a Liberal in 1935 and lost.

Hilde Marchant's report began with the story of Edwards's first cure, which I have already described. She traced the career of the healer, pointing out that he was the eldest of nine children, born in Holloway, North London, the son of a compositor and a mother who brought them up on thirty-nine shillings a week. She traced his political career, his military service, his early fight for better treatment of the natives in India where he was stationed.

In those early days, when Edwards had been transferred to Mesopotamia, he achieved a healing success that still remains vividly in his memory. In a matter of seconds, he dispersed a very bad abscess. It was there, that he learned of oriental faith, and mysticism and obtained a glimpse of nature's higher powers, which were to flow through him in later years.

He was sent to Persia, to build railway tracks and bridges, with an isolated unit, without medical supplies. Because they were handling unfamiliar tools, the natives frequently had accidents, such as crushed fingers and spiked feet. Edwards could treat them only in a most primitive way, but he recalled the rapidity of the healing.

Edwards recounted his experience of a powerful sheikh who came to his tent with his old mother, a woman who looked about a hundred years of age and who was obviously dying. The sheikh had heard the native workers call Edwards "Hakim," meaning "The Doctor," and implored him to do something for the old woman.

With not much hope, Edwards gave her some harmless pills from his kit. Three days later, an interpreter rushed in to tell Edwards that a large band of armed horsemen were galloping on the camp. Edwards went out to meet them. He was surprised to see the sheikh at their head, and that the sheikh was highly pleased with himself.

The full-armed gallop, apparently was in the nature of a thanksgiving. The old woman had made a wonderful recovery and the Sheikh was offering "Hakim" gold, carpets and ornaments, which Edwards refused.

Edwards left the Army in 1921, "a man of gallant and generous spirit, passionately defending the dignity of human beings, yet able to treat kindly their lapses." Hilde Marchant added, "It was not unnatural in such a personality that pain in others should bewilder and hurt him and make him want to endeavour to relieve it."

In London, Edwards found the depression engulfing him. He opened his small printing and stationery shop and struggled with debts and mortgages. The bailiffs, however were his most frequent visitors. He revived his political activities, but lost his deposit when he stood as a candidate. Then came his search into Spiritualism, the discovery of his healing powers and his early

cures. He worked in his shop by day, struggling to make ends meet, and from seven o'clock in the evening he laboured at his healing.

"It was never a case of payment," wrote Hilde Marchant, "and it never has been. Of that, I have undeniable evidence."

In her second instalment she began by referring to the many doctors who had seen Edwards at work. Some had been impressed to the point of being treated themselves or even risking their professional licence, and sending patients to him. Others dismissed his work within the logic of their own methods and said it was manipulation. And some, believing themselves to be open minded, had told her that it was just the faith and longing of a sick person who wanted to get well that made distorted limbs move with ease.

Because they said that healing was the special province of doctors, it was essential to get their specialised opinion on the work of Edwards. She took a doctor—a man with a very extensive London practice—to see Edwards conducting a special healing service. The doctor was an orthodox man of medicine, but said he had "an unbiased mind."

Edwards did not know he was in the audience. It was the type of meeting she had seen Edwards conduct many times.

"After prayers and hymns, the slow procession of pain and distortion passed under his hands. It is a moving sight to see him working personally and directly on a patient. There is an air of great gentleness and supreme compassion about him. There was the usual cross-section of ill-health—arthritis that had locked the joints, curved spine, partial paralysis, deafness and blocked sinus."

Then came the life-long cripple. The doctor at her side stirred with interest. The man was William John Froud, of Hartley Wintney, near Basingstoke, Hampshire. He was forty-five, and he told Edwards he had been paralysed and crippled since an attack of infantile paralysis forty-four years before.

Irreverently, but not unnaturally in the face of such a record, she added, the doctor said: "This will beat him. The muscles are atrophied." Edwards worked on this man for about five minutes. He began by saying softly, "Nothing but the Divine will can help you."

Then he began to move the man's limbs, saying, softly to himself, "Gently, gently, there must be no force, no pain." The healer swung the man's paralysed legs like a pendulum; he moved the arms and the neck and then said, "Now let us see . . ."

"The drooping and stiff neck was straight with the shoulders. Edwards told the man to touch the top of his head with his hands—a thing that had been impossible a few moments before. Then came the most incredible moment of all. This cripple had arrived on the platform with his legs sealed and immovable from hip to knee.

"Under Edwards's softly-spoken guidance, he opened his legs, and moved them. The doctor with me was deeply impressed."

The man did not walk off the platform with withered muscles suddenly healthy; nor had his left leg, which was four inches shorter than the other, suddenly become natural. What he did was to walk off the platform erect—a thing he had never done previously.

"This was not a miracle; he was not cured of a lifelong distortion in his limbs. But it was a miraculous result. He moved with greater ease and greater freedom than he had ever done before.

"What did the cautious doctor make of it? We talked to Mr. Froud afterwards; he showed how he could move and open his legs. His friend, Mr. F. Hooker, a shopkeeper who had known him for years and was with him at the meeting said that in all the years, he had never known Bill move so freely."

It was incredible, volunteered the doctor, who could not pretend to account for it.

Then he said: "I have my reservations on Edwards, but one

thing is certain: He did things with that man's limbs and with the spine cases which no doctor would dare to do because of the risk of shock."

Eight doctors had told her that they had no doubt that Edwards had inspired paralysis or cripple cases to move their limbs.

Other doctors stated that this was faith healing. There was nothing new about faith healing or healing through elation. It had gone on through the centuries. Even the most orthodox doctor would admit that the spiritual faith of a person could aid, if not cure, acute physical conditions.

They practised it themselves—the soothing, confident, "You-are-better-today" bedside manner.

But Edwards would have none of this. He was familiar with Coucism, suggestion, the receptive, believing mind and the mind over matter of the Yogi and others. He said it had nothing to do with him, that such methods were in no way related to his own.

He did not ask patients to prepare mentally, or to believe in Edwards the Spiritualist, or even to be a Christian. Indeed, some of his most outstanding successes had been with agnostics, young children, those who could not have any special faith in Edwards's healing.

Hilde Marchant told of a colonel who, in 1913, had a bad riding accident, crashing his back on a fence. The base of the spine was injured. He had considerable periods of pain, but not entire inaction. Six years later, he had another accident. This time his horse came down with him and, from then on, the pain in his back was acute. After hospital supervision it became spasmodic, but none the less still painful. He had no freedom from it. In 1914 he was wounded in the leg. The wound was healed, but the trouble in the base of the spine began in earnest. A piece of shrapnel had lodged there and when the pain became intense he agreed to wear a support over the spot.

She added that in August last year he agreed to visit Edwards. "Can't do any harm, anyway," was his general attitude. Edwards placed both hands under his jacket and ran his fingers very lightly from the top of the spine to the base. In two places Edwards said, "You have something out of place here." This was surprising as no specialist had ever made such a suggestion and X-rays had been taken frequently.

With light touches—"No manipulation at all to my mind," said the reporter. Edwards then said, "Now touch your toes six times." The colonel was astonished. He had been unable to bend, let alone touch his toes, for years. But he did so—six times.

He thanked Edwards profusely, then within an hour of leaving the Sanctuary, decided to test this "temporary relief." He could not believe it was otherwise. So he worked in his garden, digging hard, for four hours. Once again, this was a thing he had been unable to do.

"From that day he has had absolutely no ache, pain or disability, and what does he make of it? 'I leave that to you—don't ask me.'"

"In the face of testimony of this kind, there can be no doubt that Edwards has relieved pain in countless cases," she wrote. "The doctors who have watched him and studied him at work will admit the results in certain cases. But they will not face the why or how of his healing.

"They say he has the touch of healing, or that he manipulates physical deformity, or that he practises deep faith healing, or that the results are temporary. But this Edwards will not have. He goes beyond, and in fairness, one must give his own statement—"Spirit doctors guide me and use me as their instrument.'"

Her next article began with the statement: "As the doctors endeavour to produce an answer for all things, I wonder what they would make of the incredible morning I had with Major MacManaway, R.A.S.C., at his London headquarters." They would say, she added, that the major was suspect as a witness.



For fourteen years, he had studied, and now believed in, psychic phenomena.

But what of his colleagues? she asked. These were senior officers with over twenty years' Army or Navy service behind them, who did not believe in things psychic, but had to believe that Edwards diagnosed their symptoms and cured them of illness. Twenty patients had gone to see Edwards from one Service department alone, and hosts of relatives or friends of these men had also been sent.

Hilde Marchant had talked with several of them. When they gave their testimony, it was done as a recital of facts, offering no explanation, no bias or comment, except gratitude for the unexplainable result. That is how she proposed to present it.

The first was a Naval officer, a sceptic if ever there was one, a man of great efficiency, who for years had given unquestioned orders, who brushed human failure or excuses out of his sight. The only softness she noticed was a brief telephone conversation he had with his wife.

He broke his arm the previous summer, in a bad fall. In trying to stop the fall, he also pushed his wrist and thumb back heavily. The break in his arm healed by normal methods. But the wrist and thumb were very painful. Doctors said it was the natural result of a heavy fall by a man of fifty. It would go away, they stated, but it did not and became increasingly painful.

Major MacManaway, his colleague, suggested a visit to Edwards. The officer had heard about the healer but was utterly sceptical. Still, he said he would try anything once. But he also made an important condition. He would go, provided it was unnecessary to have faith in Edwards or what he was professing to do. Nor would he undertake to prepare mentally in any way. He was willing to let Edwards work provided he could keep a blank, neutral attitude to the whole business.

He made two visits. After the first, there was a great improvement. The treatment he described as remarkable. "It consisted

first of Edwards feeling my arm with his fingers, through the coat sleeve," said the officer. "Then he went to the base of the thumb and wrist and said, 'There is the trouble.' Without any pressure—he was ready to swear there was no manipulation—"he stroked the spot two or three times and said, 'Now you will find that is better.' And indeed it was, in a matter of minutes."

Still sceptical, the officer tried out his hand. He was able to push it back in a manner that had been impossible for months. About six weeks later, he paid a second visit. From that day, he had been able to move and use his hand with perfect ease. The painful condition of the hand had lasted nine months. The free and easy movement since Edwards healed it has lasted about the same time.

The reporter commented: "Here is a man who does not invent pain or miracles; a man who does not want to talk of his own personal experience to any investigator: a man who, above all, does not want to endorse the suggestion of the supernatural. But, as he said: 'Those are the facts. The pain went in seconds. Make what you like of it . . . I don't presume to know.'"

Next she described Major MacManaway's own case, which she said was outstanding. In June 1950, he had a serious accident, damaging his skull, spine, the wrist of the right arm and the left leg and foot. The hospital told his mother that he would not last the night. He received splendid medical treatment, but his case was regarded as extreme. Even if he pulled through, he would be partially paralysed.

A friend, who knew of Edwards, asked for absent healing. The hospital described the rate of recovery as abnormal. Later, he visited the healer on several occasions.

The major regarded two things highly impressive about his case. The side of his skull and face were badly torn and scarred, but the scars were now almost imperceptible. The wrist, which he was assured he would never be able to move, was now practically normal.

Doctors said there would be some repercussions from the smash and arthritis was bound to set in. So far it had not.

One doctor, who has seen Edwards at work on many occasions, had himself been treated by the healer, had also sent his wife for treatment, and was convinced of his special healing powers. This doctor, who for professional reasons could not allow his name to be published, gave her his opinion of the successes he had witnessed, as if he were on oath in a witness box.

"His wife suffered from fibrositis of the shoulder and heavy headaches. Without manipulation or pressure, she was told by the healer, exactly where the trouble was, what it was, and then, after a soft stroking of the shoulder, told it would not return again. That was eighteen months ago. It had not returned."

The doctor's case was similar. He had acute pain in the lower part of his back. A specialist advised him to go into hospital for treatment for a slipped disc.

"He had considerable advice and the treatment one would expect a doctor to seek," wrote the reporter. "The pain remained."

He visited Edwards, who ran his fingers gently down the spine and, without applying any pressure or manipulation, told him to get up, touch his toes, and walk out. From that day there has been no pain.

To those medical men who questioned the spontaneous results achieved by Edwards and suggested that the relief or cure was only temporary, this doctor replied, "My own case was cured within ten days and for twenty months it has not caused me the slightest discomfort."

Hilde Marchant commented that people of this kind did not lightly speak of the incredible, nor were they easily taken in. But they admitted that the healer must have something."

Then she cited the case of Virginia Towey, of Boswell Street, London, concerning whom there was a full record at the

Children's Hospital, Great Ormond Street, London. She suffered from nephritis, a painful disease that causes slow movement of the limbs and even leads to paralysis. She was under the healer's care for some time. Now she was able to lead a normal, active childhood. And this was after the hospital had tried a variety of treatments. In this manner these cases of sceptics, children and downright disbelievers accumulated.

"I don't care what the state of the mind is," asserted the healer. "My direction is by the Divine Will."

"The convincing thing about Harry Edwards is that he admits his failures and limitations," is how Hilde Marchant began her fourth article. "That is in keeping with the sincerity of the man and his work. Certainly during this investigation he has never claimed to have cured every case he has tackled. That would be unbelievable, for in that time he has received more than a million letters from his patients. He has accepted them all as cases he would, with humility and faith, endeavour to heal."

The healer estimated failure in twenty per cent of these cases.

His own analysis was that eighty per cent of those people had benefited in some way. Of that eighty per cent, he claimed that a third were made completely well.

"And bear in mind," he added, "they come to us as a last resort and are usually regarded as incurable by normal treatment."

"This is a startling, almost presumptuous claim," wrote the journalist. "No doctor would go so far as to say he had cured a third of his sick and condemned patients. Where is the evidence?"

"For some weeks I have been reading and trying to assess a remarkable document. It is typewritten and ready for the publisher, and it is Edwards's own documented account of his successful cases."

The chapter headings were quite simple—"Arms, Legs," or "Spine," or "Disseminated Sclerosis." Under these headings 20,000 people gave their testimony that Edwards cured them

after doctors had failed. This book is now published under the title of *The Evidence for Spirit Healing*.

Hilde Marchant stated that she had received testimonies from public men, from senior churchmen, from doctors, and signed testimony from a solicitor.

Then she told the story of a London lorry driver, Mr. R. Hurd, whose son Barry, aged eight, was about to be taught braille because his eyesight was rapidly failing. The child had been seen by specialists at two hospitals and the father told there was nothing they could suggest.

He took his son to one of Edwards's meetings, and the healer concentrated over the child for a few moments. Then he took off the child's glasses and the boy read an "Exit" sign at the back of the two-hundred-yard-long hall.

Mr. Hurd was definite: "He has never been able to do that. It is incredible." He is not a Spiritualist, no believer in anything very much, except his local chapel and the Working Men's Club. His verdict was, "My boy need no longer learn his lessons in darkness."

She quoted the testimony sent by an ex-school-teacher, crippled with advanced disseminated sclerosis. Edwards failed to cure him. The man was hopeful but not convinced before he went to the Sanctuary as "a last chance." But he came away convinced, saying, "Yes, here is a man who somehow has contacted a power in the universe that can heal." It was the things he saw in the Sanctuary, the people who were healed, that convinced him.

She added that churchmen were divided about Edwards's powers. "The Rev. Alex Holmes, of the Congregational Church, Godalming, Surrey, not only believes but, under his influence, is developing healing powers himself. At the moment, he says, he is only a novice. But this clergyman had opened his church to Edwards, and, under conditions of extreme reverence, the congregation was overwhelmed.

"One Church dignitary, whose address is Westminster Abbey, told me he had no doubts of Edwards's powers. He had seen his achievements too long and too often to doubt."

Next came an account, frankly supplied by Edwards, of the close friend he had been unable to cure, Jack Webber, the medium whom the healer had sponsored. They worked together, and were neighbours.

When Webber was stricken with meningitis, Edwards speedily went to his aid, with all the desire and will to heal his friend. But he failed. After two days, Webber passed on.

Edwards's own explanation was that perhaps he was too close to Webber to help him. Perhaps he was demanding instead of seeking aid. Two weeks later, he was asked to help in another case of meningitis. That man is still alive.

Hilde Marchant wrote: "It is unaccountable, as, indeed, the whole investigation of Edwards's healing powers is unaccountable . . . except in the terms he expresses: 'The healing is out of my hands. I am the instrument.'"

Her final article dealt with the monetary aspect of the healing mission. It began: "Harry Edwards, the spirit healer, works from a spacious and splendid home at Shere in Surrey. Materialistically, this is a considerable advance from the back parlour of the small Balham house where he started. The one person who will openly discuss this worldly progress is Harry Edwards."

For the most part, his original patients were the pensioners, unemployed and working-class folk of Balham. Then, as now, he never asked their financial circumstances. For them, it was a question of dropping sixpences in an offering box to keep the work going. As his reputation grew, he was approached by people with more means.

He took those on, too, for they were also sick. But where his Balham patients left their pence, the richer patients left cheque and pounds.

It was the same today. He treated a great number of people for nothing. Indeed, to pensioners and those too sick to work there was a specific request that no money be sent. The wealthy or comfortably-off patients sent gifts of money or presents.

"But money is not discussed," she wrote. "It is left to patients to equate gratitude with the size of their purse. Talking about finance, Edwards jovially admits, 'I've been in the red at the bank many a time, but it works out somehow.'"

Edwards had prospered. But changed circumstances had only enabled him to expand his work. He worked through one day into the early hours of the next, and took only one Sunday in a fortnight to rest. On the other Sunday he travelled the country, holding public demonstrations of healing.

She added: "To see him at work in his home is something of a shock. That is, if you have any pre-conceived ideas—as I confess I had—that he must surround his mission of healing with mystic, awe-inspiring symbolism, and with the robes of supernatural power. True, at Burrows Lea there is the still, calm hall and the hushed reverence of the Sanctuary. But it is in the office that most of the work is done—and what an office it is!"

There were dictaphones, recording machines, helpers ripping open thousands of letters a week, and Edwards, in a sports jacket and flannels, going through them all. In another room, five typists worked continually through the day, sending out the replies.

"There it is—a litter of stamps, postal orders, paper clips, a dozen wire filing baskets of letters, and a cross on the wall. It is called 'absent healing'. What can you make of it?

"Prosaic and business-like though the atmosphere may be, thousands see in it a source of modern miracles, the inexplicable but positive beginning of health. They ask for no reasoned explanation."

Edwards told her that some of his office helpers had developed spirit-healing qualities.

This, she said, was hard to accept but he said, "The right people are guided to this house." Certainly their faith and devotion to him were overwhelming.

"Several work a hard, long week for no payment at all, and those who have worked closely and intimately within the organisation for a number of years have no doubts about the startling results.

"The weekly post is, for the most part, a moving, sad record of human sickness and pain. Even after the years, as the unhappy flood has increased, Edwards is still deeply moved and insists on individual treatment for each case."

Hilde Marchant's verdict was: "Whatever may be one's attitude to Spiritualism and the form in which Harry Edwards practises it, there can be no doubt about the integrity of the man's own beliefs. He is utterly sincere. He does not hurl Spiritualism at you. Indeed, it is only on rare occasions that he refers to it, and then it is with such a natural acceptance that it is purely conversational. He is a man without vanity but still with an eagerness and pride in his work. He is still shaken by some of the results which he achieves at the Sanctuary but not bewildered. He believes he knows why."

Though the doctors had attacked him viciously or tolerated him humorously, he would have no word said against them professionally. He was worldly, in that he enjoyed attractive possessions, but then in the next sentence, discussing the occasional overdraft, would say: "Couldn't care two hoots. We get by somehow."

"He is, in fact, a confusion of a man," she wrote. "But it makes sense within his personality. Undoubtedly he has spiritual strength. It is not surprising that thousands believe in him. The explanations he puts forward of his healing powers are a matter for the individual to accept or not, but Harry Edwards is a man with no doubts."



## CHAPTER XVI

### THE PRIMATE SAYS "NO"

I HAVE already recorded the healing performed by Harry Edwards in an Anglican church. The scrapbook records his visit to a Congregational church at Godalming, Surrey, at the invitation of its minister, the Rev. Alex Holmes, who told the *Surrey Advertiser* that as a firm believer in the powers of the healer he had taken a lead in arranging this meeting. You can judge its effect, when I tell you that the newspaper account, stressing that it is a factual report, contains these words:

"The events that occurred at Godalming Congregational Church on Wednesday may have an explanation in scientific psychology and medicine. The answer may lay in the New Testament text, 'Greater works than these shall ye do.' They certainly present a challenge to purely materialistic explanation."

Now it is the *Hampstead and Highgate Express* which records the healing of a seventy-four-year-old Golders Green woman, Miss Annette Jacobs, who was cured by Edwards when she was paralysed and nearly blind. The newspaper records that now she is a healer, without having had one failure in five years.

At this stage I introduce the opinion expressed by Dr. Leslie D. Weatherhead, the famous Methodist minister, though I shall have to return to him later. There is an article by him in the *Methodist Recorder* which describes "remarkable cures through non-physical treatment" and says that we are on the threshold of thrilling new discoveries in healing. Weatherhead, with many years' experience in spiritual healing, because of his work at London's City Temple in conjunction with doctors, paid a great tribute to Edwards.

Because of statements made later by Weatherhead when the Archbishop of York criticised spiritual healing, it is as well to quote what the Methodist minister wrote in his article:

"Let us not forget to put side by side with these activities the claims of Spiritualists. Some like Lilley (described in *The Gift of Healing*) go into trance and believe themselves controlled by the spirits of the dead, who advise and diagnose and guide as to the measures to be taken for recovery. Others, like Mr. Harry Edwards, do not go into trance. They close their eyes and let exploring hands wander over the patient's body. They believe themselves guided by the spirits as to the seat of the trouble being treated. Harry Edwards believes himself guided by the spirits of Pasteur and Lord Lister. The light touch of his hands has undoubtedly brought healing to many.

"At Mr. Edwards's invitation I sat next to him recently at his headquarters while he treated fifteen patients during one afternoon and early evening. While my impressions were fresh I wrote out a careful report on what I had seen, and got a reliable friend who went with me, to check it lest I had made anything up or exaggerated. No one could help being deeply impressed by Mr. Edwards himself and by his amazing work. He is sincere, modest and compassionate. There were some instances in which, frankly, he seemed unable to accomplish anything. One blind woman received no benefit. But, under my eyes, a man who had had to be helped into the room and who used two sticks, limping painfully with arthritis, walked out without them and without pain; a woman's deafness appeared to be instantaneously cured; another woman of fifty, with arthritis in hip and spine, told us she had had an accident in childhood and had never walked since without a stick.

"Edwards, not by manipulation, but by passing his hands lightly over her knees, loosened them in a way which made her exclaim, 'I have not done that for years.' Soon she walked without any aids and with a new freedom.

"A man with sinus and nasal trouble, who said he had not breathed through his nose for years, went out with mouth shut, inhaling heartily through both nostrils. And so the story goes on.

"No one who has studied these instances through the years—as I have tried to do—can have the slightest doubt that authentic healings do take place in a remarkable way, and that they fall outside normally familiar categories. They cannot be explained by reference to quick manipulation, or suggestion, or hypnotism, or any known technique of modern healing methods. Nor are they the temporary improvement, followed so often by grievous relapse, which some patients show when in a state of emotional excitement as at a healing mission. Nor are they necessarily dependent on faith in a religious sense, though clearly the patient would not seek the treatment without having *some* measure of faith in the sense of expectant trust.

"This gift we are discussing is what might be called, without disparagement, a freak endowment. I mean by that that either one has this gift and this power, or one has not. Probably it can be increased by use, by confidence, perhaps by prayer. But it is widely practised without reference to religion."

Later in this article, he summarises the healing of Edwards as "grand work."

Now let us turn our attention to the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was asked by the Lower House of the Convocation of the Church of England to set up a committee to investigate spiritual healing. When it was arranged for Edwards to give a demonstration at a theatre in Canterbury, the organisers of the meeting asked the Primate to send representatives. He replied, through his Chaplain, declining the invitation. He did not feel that holding demonstrations was the right way to further the work of spiritual healing. He was also unable to commend to his clergy this particular manner of the ministry of healing, which he felt must be a personal one.

The people of Canterbury did not agree with the Archbishop, for the theatre was so crowded that the traffic was disorganised. I took the chair at this Canterbury meeting, and could not resist the temptation to refer to the Primate's attitude. Obviously, I pointed out, the Archbishop could not accept the invitation because if he did, he might have to change his name to the Archbishop of Recanterbury. Instead of being the See of Canterbury, perhaps it would be better to refer to it as the "Don't See of Canterbury."

"We always seem to get the cold shoulder from the Church of England," I stated, "although the work that is being done at this meeting is directly in the line with that of the early Christian church."

The scrapbook records the visit paid, by three photographers and some reporters attached to *Life*, the famous American illustrated journal, to a London demonstration. They took scores of photographs. They photographed the audience coming in and going out, as they were singing hymns, and when they were just sitting still doing nothing. They took pictures of Edwards treating patients.

From each side of the stage, a battery of electronic flash lights dazzled the audience with intermittent flashing. One photographer carried a portable radio apparatus, which, resembling a walkie-talkie set, was connected to the shutter of one of his cameras, sending a radio impulse from its aerial to a receiving set connected to the flashlight.

After all this expenditure of American energy and hustle, you would have thought a whole issue of *Life* would have been filled with the pictures and the story. Yet there were only four. The account consisted of one hundred and fifty words, which described Edwards as "an unlicensed faith healer."

At this stage, it is worth recording that the mailbag had grown to ten thousand letters a week, a mammoth correspondence, the greatest surely ever received by any healer in the world. Edwards

expressed his own astonishment at the number of healing successes which were being achieved, because these had grown out of all proportion. "Yet, obviously, as he consistently maintains," I wrote, "he is not responsible because of the sheer physical impossibility of dealing personally with all those requests. He rightly regards it as a tribute to the spirit power involved."

Because the fame of Edwards has spread abroad, he has received invitations to demonstrate his gifts in many lands. So far, he has visited Holland and Switzerland, where enthralled audiences acclaimed the healer.

In Holland, one Dutch illustrated newspaper likened the scenes at his meetings to famous Breughel paintings. Another, which devoted a whole page to his demonstrations, called it "healings which border on miracles." There are pictures showing cripples discarding crutches and walking unaided. The accounts state that Holland has never before witnessed such healing scenes.

In Switzerland he met with equal success. As a result, in both countries healers were encouraged to follow his example, so that the work goes on spreading.

Now it is the *Daily Express* which turns its spotlight on the famous healer, following the comments made in the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury. The *Daily Express* instituted what it described as a "painstaking inquiry into the whole subject of faith healing." Though, as I have already pointed out, Edwards is not a faith healer, the newspaper could not leave him out of the series. It told a story which was bound to interest millions of people because it concerned the healing of Freddy Grisewood, the famous B.B.C. commentator.

"I do not know what the power is that Harry Edwards transmits," he said, "but results are extraordinary." For two years, Grisewood had suffered from osteo-arthritis which gave him great pain in the leg and hip. He sought relief from all forms of

medical treatment. He was given ray treatment at Droitwich, but in the end his condition was unchanged. His only hope, said the doctor, was a serious operation to give him a new hip joint.

Then he met an Anglican clergyman, an old friend, who saw him hobbling painfully, and told him to seek the help of Edwards. It is ironic to contemplate that while the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, and other eminent clerical figures, are unfriendly to spirit healing, one of their clergymen should direct a sufferer to a healing medium.

Grisewood telephoned Edwards and made an appointment. "I went to Shere, with an open mind," he says. "Immediately after he touched me the pain in my leg disappeared. Very soon afterwards I played a full round of golf. I was tired at the end of it, of course, but I felt no discomfort. Before seeing Edwards, I just couldn't go on after two holes; the pain was too much for me.

"Before I went to Edwards I gritted my teeth to turn over in bed. Now I can flop about like a seal in water. My leg still gets tired and stiff occasionally. But no pain. I still limp, but friends tell me I am walking much more confidently. I am losing my fear of the old pain.

"The whole horizon of my life has been changed—wonderfully brightened—by this affair. Now this has happened to me—and not to someone else—I cannot deny the obvious results any longer. I have been absolutely staggered by it all."

The *Daily Express* asked a member of its panel, Canon Hugh Warner, to visit the Shere Sanctuary and see Edwards at work. It is worth quoting his report in full:

"It was all very simple, informal, and down to earth. A quiet company of thirty men and women seated in two rows, a man and two women assisting Mr. Harry Edwards. As these four sat down they remained still, with eyes closed for a full minute. After that no more than a friendly greeting to each patient as he or she sat on the stool in front of him. The atmosphere was that

of a doctor's surgery rather than that of a chapel, though standing on a table in front of us was a cross with flowers on each side.

"As arms and legs were apparently freed from their arthritis with a quiet touch of the hand, and sometimes a firm clasp, words of encouragement were given to each. There was the assurance each gave of pain vanished and movement restored. It was not possible for me, a mere onlooker, in so short a time to pass any kind of judgment on the degree of healing involved in each case, or, indeed, its permanence. To call it 'faith healing' was clearly quite wrong if one is thinking of faith as of necessity possessed by those who were ill. That did not seem a necessary factor according to Mr. Edwards, though his own faith was quite unquestioned."

Further, the newspaper sent a special investigator, who examined the phenomenon of absent healing. His report was, "It is hard for the most determined sceptic to disdain the evidence presented in thousands of testimonials seen by *Daily Express* investigators."

He described Edwards as "one of the most widely known spiritual healers, whose bulging mailbag confirmed that his unseen 'patients' get better."

Of Edwards he wrote: "It would be easy to understand large pride in a man who is constantly at the receiving end of so much gratitude. But Edwards, a man with silver-white hair, clear blue eyes, and an expression of uncalculating sincerity, remains humble."

When the interview was over, Edwards lit a cigarette and began to cough. Jokingly, he said to the reporter, "I have a smoker's cough and it won't respond to the healing treatment." This simple humour appealed to the journalist, who commented, "That remark was typical of the man, free of personal pomp and canting humbug."

From the *Daily Express* we turn to *Answers*, the well-known

weekly, which featured the healing by Edwards in several issues. The article was written by F. Terry Newman, who, as I wrote this book, is announced as the editor of a magazine, *The Spiritual Healer*, which Edwards has founded.

Now I am skimming the scrapbook, looking for some variation of the Press stories so as not to repeat myself. Sufficient has been quoted from newspapers all over the land to illustrate the theme of this book.

I see that when the *Sunday Empire News* published an article by Ralph Slater, the hypnotist, Edwards could not be left out. Slater was arguing that "the answer to so-called faith healing and miracle cures is—hypnotism . . ." The newspaper interviewed Edwards, whom it described as "Britain's most famous unorthodox healer."

He dismissed Slater's suggestion in a few words: "You may state categorically that hypnotism and self-hypnosis do not enter into our work. I am neither a hypnotist nor a doctor. I am a printer. Nor do I claim to do the healing, for I have had no medical training. People are healed under my hands—but I am only the instrument through which the spirit power works."

Having referred to the criticisms made by the Archbishop of Canterbury, let us now turn to those made later by his colleague, Dr. C. Garbett, Archbishop of York. He gave a warning about what he called sensational healing missions.

He told of missions conducted twenty-five years ago by a "well-known lay healer, now dead." A small committee, of which he was chairman, investigated "sensational claims made of numerous cures." They postponed their investigation for a year and after "most careful inquiries" found no evidence to support the claims that there had been any cures of organic disease or of any lasting cures of functional disorders.

He talked with the healer and was convinced of his sincerity, but was astonished at his "complete ignorance of what was



meant by diagnosis and his readiness to accept as correct the description the patients gave of their disease."

Dr. Garbett said he was not warning his hearers about smaller missions "confined to a well-instructed congregation, or to those prepared and sent by their own parish priest." He was referring to much-advertised missions by American evangelists and sometimes in their own Church.

"I believe these do great harm by their hysterical and emotional atmosphere and by making unjustifiable claims of cures," he added.

"There is a grave objection to public missions of healing where preparation of individuals is impossible and where hands are laid indiscriminately upon all who come. In the methods used in spiritual healing—suggestion, prayer, laying-on of hands and anointing—and in the cures it has wrought, there is nothing specifically Christian.

"Parallels both for methods and cures can be found in non-Christian religions. And there are healers who apparently possess some strange gift of healing who are not Christians.

"Without prayer and preparation, the laying-on of hands and anointing may come dangerously near magic. While the patient should be encouraged to a high state of expectancy that he will receive a blessing, no promise should be made of a physical cure. This may come to pass and for it, fervent prayer should be offered. But we have no right to guarantee it.

"The Christian should claim that all that is best in the art of healing comes from God. There are tens of thousands who long ago would have been helpless invalids or dead if God had not used the skill, science and care of doctors, surgeons and nurses to restore them to health. Without any resort to sensational and doubtful methods the Church has plenty of scope for the healing of body and soul."

Then Dr. Leslie Weatherhead, to whose visit to Shere I have already referred, took a hand. He wrote in the *Sunday Graphic*,

which thought his article was worthy of its front page. I must mention that the *Sunday Graphic* is owned by the same firm as the *Sunday Chronicle* which, only a few months earlier, did so much to publicise the work of Edwards. Here are Dr. Weatherhead's criticisms:

"Nothing in the Press for years has given me so much pleasure as the pronouncement of the Archbishop of York. We are threatened here with mass meetings of excited people, often made more exciting, suggestible and hysterical by the singing of choruses and sentimental hymns."

Then came this direct attack upon spirit healing: "The missioner, in the name of religion or spiritualism, then invites to the platform any who are ill of any disease whatsoever. If the patient says he feels better, his recovery is reported to the meeting. Indeed, since reporters are inevitably present, the news of the 'miraculous cure' goes out to the world."

It was, he added, good that people should be healed, if the healing were permanent and if the methods used did not cause more heartbreaking disappointment and loss of faith to the many than of cure to the few.

What was not reported, he averred, was the undoubted fact that in a few days the patient was usually as bad as ever and suffered from depression and hopelessness as well. "For thirty years," he wrote, "I have collected figures about these missions and the PERMANENT cures effected at them are practically nil.

"Let us admit straight away that many of these healers have a strange power called by some investigators 'odic force,' which is not essentially anything to do with religion or spiritualism.

"Odic force used scientifically, repeatedly and wisely, has, in certain areas of illness, been successful in obtaining permanent cure and much is to be hoped from it.

"In my opinion true spiritual healing is something quite different from these nauseating public displays of emotional hysteria.

"There is a place for true spiritual healing. In a quiet room away from the crowd, let a member of the praying group lay his hands on the patient, who should by this time have received preparatory teaching.

"Unhappily the public wants magic, the quick-cure and the sensational meeting."

This was too much for Edwards, who sent his reply to the *Sunday Graphic*, which printed only a part of it. I prefer to give the whole of it, so that you can read what the healer wrote.

### BY HARRY EDWARDS

The Archbishop of York recently condemned spiritual healing on the ground that these healings are not permanent.

It will be remembered that the Upper House of the Convocation agreed to ask the Archbishop of Canterbury to appoint a committee to examine the claims of spiritual healing. The above criticism is the first authoritative pronouncement and seems to have been given as a "lead" to the Church to oppose spiritual healing becoming an integral part of the Church's ministry.

This is surely a strange position for a high church dignitary to adopt and can only be a denial of Christ's command to his ministers, "To go forth, preach the gospel and heal the sick."

On what grounds does the Archbishop rest his opinion? Do they rest upon up-to-date research into the claims of spiritual healing that so impressed the Convocation? No! His strictures are back-dated twenty-five years when he watched the work of an unnamed healer of those far-off days.

If this is the weightiest argument the Church can produce, and one can be sure the Archbishop would use the severest criticism he can find, it is very clear how weak his case against spiritual healing is.

To offer a judgment of the evidence of one healer, and that a quarter of a century old, appears to indicate that the Church is seeking any straw to attack spiritual healing and any argument

it can find o prevent the Church adopting Christ's commandment.

The writer was more than surprised to see that the Rev. Dr. Leslie Weatherhead has supported the Archbishop's views. Dr. Weatherhead has visited the Sanctuary at Shere, and was so favourably impressed that he expressed praise for that which he saw.

Furthermore, he invited the writer to conduct a small healing service in his home, which took place. In the private conversation that followed afterwards suggestions were discussed for closer collaboration between our work and his Church.

Let us review the question of permanency. The second patient I treated eighteen years ago was for cancer of the lung. The man had been sent home from St. Thomas's Hospital as incurable and his wife was told to make him "as comfortable as possible." The cancer was removed overnight. The man is still alive today, over eighty.

The third case was that of a dying girl with throat and lung trouble; she also had tuberculosis. Her ill-condition completely cleared in a matter of weeks. The doctors gave her a clean bill of health. She was employed as a nurse in the same sanatorium where previously she was a patient. She married, has a family and all are in good health. That too, was eighteen years ago.

Various national newspapers have watched patients treated at healing demonstrations for months afterwards and have reported upon them, with the utmost satisfactory results regarding permanency of the healing.

*Psychic News* also conducted a painstaking inquiry which again vindicated the healing. At Burrows Lea there are thousands of testimonies to complete cures—these are now being printed and will be published soon (over ten thousand cases).

Will the Church of all denominations now take notice of these claims, which can be proven?

Why do the Archbishop and Dr. Weatherhead turn their eyes to what may or may not be unsuccessful healings rather than consider the good that spiritual healing has done and is still doing?

Surely the test of spiritual healing is the measure of success and not the smaller measure of seeming failure. Even in "seeming" failures it is possible to under-estimate the help that is given in so many ways. Easement to the body, comfort to the mind and in extreme cases a peaceful passing instead of an agonised one. Remember the class of patients who usually come to the spiritual healer are those for whom medical science can do no more. We again say, let the healing be judged by its success.

It is pertinent to ask: Why is it that these gifted clerics are judging spiritual healing in the same way that one can look through the reverse ends of a pair of binoculars? Why are they at pains to decry and minimise the good work of healing the world over?

Is the answer that they are looking for reasons why their churches should not embark upon the Christian mission of healing? Are they timorous of trying to follow in the Master's footsteps and to fulfil His prophecy, "Greater things than these shall ye do also"? We hope not.

Spiritual healing is proven today; it can never be blanketed, it is only a matter of time before the Church must acclaim it and accept it as part of its Christian responsibility. The sooner the better, for through spiritual healing the Church can once more become the guide and comforter for all souls.



The *Sunday Graphic* must have submitted Edwards's reply to Dr. Weatherhead. On the same page that it printed extracts from the healer's answer it also published these comments from the Methodist minister:

"It would be false to suppose that either the Archbishop of

York or myself do not believe in spiritual healing. We are both eager to see this essential ministry become once more the practice of the universal Church.

"For Mr. Harry Edwards I have the greatest respect and admiration. Surely this is proved by the fact that I have sent many patients to him, visited his healing centre, and welcomed him to my home, where I introduced him to a number of patients.

"I applaud the conditions under which he does his work—in a quiet room with only a few people present when I saw him. He did not seek the multitudes or the flaming headlines. He did not put the onus of recovery on the patient or blame the patient who did not recover for not having 'faith.' Moreover, he told the patients to return for more treatment. This is not the kind of healing mission which I deplore and about which I wrote. I never imagined that Mr. Edwards would think I could be referring to him.

"I do not share with him the interpretation of his undoubted powers in terms of spiritualism. I think he possesses what psychologists call 'odic force,' but certainly it is successful, wisely used, and can bring permanent results.

"There should be a place for its use in the ministry of the Church, but the latter should include prayer and sacramental anointing which, used in the right way, would bring healing to many who now suffer."

## CHAPTER XVII

### 'THE PILGRIMS' TRAIN'

WONDERING what was an appropriate end to this book—for, as I write, the work of Edwards still continues to grow—I thought that this description of one of my last visits to Burrows Lea would make a fitting last chapter:

The 1.7 p.m. that leaves Waterloo for Dorking North is the "pilgrims' train." It is the one which carries sufferers to the thrice-weekly healing sessions of Harry Edwards at his Surrey sanctuary, Burrows Lea.

Outside Dorking North Station a group of us waited. Then a woman with a delightful Scottish dialect asked a porter, "Where do I get the bus for Burrows Lea?" He knew the answer, it was a question he had obviously been asked scores of times. "It's a yellow bus," he replied. "It will be along presently."

I noticed that when her companion moved she had a limp. This was the day of days for her. . . . Soon she would be face to face with the famous healer and her face reflected the hope in her mind.

Nearby, taking shelter from the drizzling rain, were three women conversing, the youngest having just joined them. It was patent that they were all going to the Sanctuary, for one wore a surgical boot.

Soon, a yellow coach appears, stops outside the station, and the drivers shows a sign which reads, "For Burrows Lea." We all clamber aboard. I see that a ruddy-faced man has to be helped as he leans heavily on his sticks. In front of me sits a quiet man in a neat navy blue suit. His face is etched with the sorrow that comes of years of pain.

The coach, efficiently driven, moves quickly through the busy little town of Dorking on to the Guildford Road. In about twenty minutes we reach the pretty village of Shere, one of the loveliest in Surrey.

Soon, after travelling through some charming lanes, the driver comes to a signpost marked "Burrows Cross." It is not long before we see a blue sign bearing the words, "The Sanctuary, Burrows Lea—Straight On," with an arrow pointing the way through a beautiful drive. We emerge in front of an attractive, typically English country house. Outside, half-a-dozen cars are parked.

We are led through a conservatory, filled with flowers of every hue, into a large room. This is the Sanctuary. The healing is in progress. A score of people await their turn.

Four white-coated healers are at work, Edwards, Olive and George Burton, and Mrs. Eileen Nicholson. On a nearby table there is the emblem of the sanctuary, a cross in a circle, made in some effective plastic material.

On the walls are the original psychic drawings of Lister and Pasteur, the two eminent medical figures who have associated themselves with Edwards from the Beyond—there is a remarkable story behind these pictures executed by Frank Leah, that genius of a psychic artist—and a reproduction of Durer's famous painting of praying hands.

While treatment is given, a photographer moves quietly around to get the best shots for his flashlight pictures that are to illustrate a forthcoming series in a national Sunday newspaper.

One by one the waiting sufferers, who form a small cross-section of afflicted humanity, move forward for treatment, taking their place on a stool in front of Edwards. Each lives in a world of pain and mostly they belong to that doomed section of the community upon whom the doctors have passed the dreaded verdict of hopeless. Edwards greets them all with a radiant smile. He is surrounded with an aura of confidence.



Now it is the turn of the young Scotswoman. She and her companion have come all the way from Dumfriesshire. Her broken left arm has been useless for three years; the fingers are crippled. In a matter of seconds Edwards brings freedom to the arm and makes the fingers straighter. To prove that spirit healing has taken place, she grips his hand at his request.

Then he works on her limping leg—she explains that this condition "just came overnight." Removing her shoe, the healer straightens the toes and bends the knee, this too, in a matter of seconds. Tears of gratitude well up into her eyes as she hands the healer a bunch of white heather she has brought all the way from Scotland. Then she bursts into tears as she moves back to her seat.

Henry (though his name is Harry all his friends call him Henry) whispers to Olive Burton, who goes out of the Sanctuary, returning presently with two beautiful tea roses, which the healer gives to the young-looking Scotswoman, who is the mother of four children. She bursts into tears again—and who could blame her?

The healing is efficiently organised, with George Burton helping in all cases, his wife dealing with eye and nerve troubles and Mrs. Nicholson treating affected hands.

Leaning on a crutch, a young man comes forward, aided by his wife and George Burton. His legs are stiff and he wears calipers. He has come from Wolverhampton for treatment. He tells Henry that his trouble is rheumatoid arthritis. The moment the healer touches him he says that the condition is osteo-arthritis, which means that it is chronic.

I notice once again, as I have done on many occasions, that Henry does all his healing with his eyes closed. The patient sits on the stool with his legs straight out in front of him. He has suffered for ten years. Now the treatment starts and the young man smiles hopefully in anticipation. Soon his stiff shoulders are eased and he is able for the first time in ten years to put each

hand on his head. Henry tells him that the joints will take longer to yield.

"Take his coat off," says the healer. This is quite a job! He treats the shoulders. Then he looks at the patient's fingers which are all curved. The man explains that they were straight before, but the surgeon bent them because he thought the sufferer might be able to grip better. The healer shakes his head in dismay. Nevertheless he succeeds in getting more life into the fingers, which are soon able to grip.

Next he gets to work on the legs, without moving the calipers, and soon there is a little movement in the knees. Henry bids the man to stand and then to move his right leg. He does so until it is at right angles to his body. "Now the left leg." This moves forward, though not as high as its companion.

"He's never done that before," says the wife. "It will take time," Edwards tells her, "but . . ." And the young man returns to his seat with far greater comfort than he had before.

Now a pretty young girl moves forward for treatment. I had seen her at Waterloo, waiting for the train. She tells the story of an accident. While cleaning a window, she slipped through it and cut the tendons of her right hand. She has had two operations, which left the fingers bent. Edwards looks at them.

"It's difficult when they have had surgery," he explains, for not even spirit healing can restore what has been cut away. She says that she has worn splints, but these had the effect of contracting the fingers. "When I was having my baby," she adds, "they found that my arm was wasting away."

In a matter of seconds the healer had straightened the fingers and brought movement into the affected arm. That is the most he can do in one demonstration—to show how spirit power can produce an immediate improvement which will be accelerated with further healing.

Then follows one of the dramatic episodes of the afternoon.

It concerns a woman, born with one leg shorter than the other, who, after operations, is compelled to wear a surgical boot. "What do you want me to do?" the healer asks. "What are you suffering from is congenital dislocation of the hip."

After an examination he tells her: "They have shortened the joint. I cannot put the bone back that they have taken away." In the time that it takes you to read these words, Henry puts new life into the affected hip, for the woman is now able to lift the knee right up.

Then he asks, "Do you want me to lengthen the leg?" He measures the two limbs and shows that one is four inches longer than the other. "It may put the boot out of shape," he says. She hesitates and then gives a firm "Yes."

Taking the shorter leg in his hands, the healer "pulls" it—and this extraordinary action, mark you, causes no pain. "It is now half an inch longer," he tells her. "And it's stronger. See what has happened."

She does so. The leg is undoubtedly longer. "This will help you to walk better," says the healer. "but you will have to have the boot altered."

Now it is the turn of the man in the navy blue suit. No wonder his face is etched with suffering. This is his first visit and he has a story of suffering to relate, a tale of years spent in pain.

"I was a driver for thirty-four years," he begins. "About nine years ago, I helped to pick up a press and the other chap let it go. I pulled all the muscles. They treated me for lumbago and spinal trouble."

Henry, who has been listening sympathetically, takes a quick look at the spine. "You have spondylitis," the healer tells him; "it is slight, not chronic." The dictionary defines this as "inflammation of a vertebra." Assisted by George Burton, Henry performs a gentle manipulation of the spine.

Here I must pause to tell you that he has had no training in osteopathy, or manipulation of any kind. All his tuition comes

from the Other Side. And the movements he makes are different from those of any bonesetter I have ever watched.

"I'll do your neck now," the healer tells him. The man gasps as Edwards touches it, but soon the neck is loosened and for the first time for years it moves easily from side to side. "Your back is straight now," says Henry, adding a moment later, "You have the back of a Guardsman." And certainly it is straight.

The man had complained of pain in his ribs. The healer smacks them—and there is no pain. "I have never been able to stick my chest out," are his next words, which he immediately belies. "Am I allowed to bend?" he asked anxiously. "The more the better," he is told. The man's face clearly expresses his thoughts when he adds, "And the hospital said I was redundant, that I could just paddle about, that's all."

Now the ruddy-checked man moves slowly forward, leaning on his sticks and assisted by his wife. He had come all the way from Darlington for this, his first visit. For twelve months he has suffered from disseminated sclerosis. This burly Yorkshireman weeps unashamedly from sheer emotion.

"The doctors can't do any more for me," he declares. His spine is rigid, but the healer makes it pliable in a matter of seconds. Again comes a burst of tears.

The man pathetically puts out his hands, saying, "There is no sense of direction with them," Again, in a matter of seconds, vitality is brought into the fingers which enjoy a new freedom. This produces more tears, and we are all embarrassed.

"My head has no sense of balance," says the man. Henry gives it his attention and it takes on a new lease of life. Both legs are stiff, so the healer loosens them. He makes the man grip his hand to show that a tremendous alleviation has occurred.

"You are going to walk now," Edwards asserts. With George Burton holding his arm, and with tears still flooding his face, the man slowly but triumphantly walks back to his seat, lifting each knee in turn.

You may read about "miracles" which are said to have happened in Palestine two thousand years ago. No one can prove whether they did or did not occur. The records, though regarded as sacred by many, are the subject of contention. But the events I have described are typical of those happening regularly in Edwards's Sanctuary today, to which there are thousands of witnesses.

But they are not "miracles." They are demonstrations of the reality of the power of the spirit which has raised up one man to perform a great service to suffering humanity.

★   ★   ★   \*

*Readers who require the services of Harry Edwards should write to him at Burrows Lea, Shere, Surrey, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope for reply.*

You will be particularly interested to read *Harry Edwards the Healer*, by Paul Miller, price 2s. 3d. by post, *Born to Heal*, the biography of Harry Edwards, by the same author, 11s. by post. There are also these three books by Harry Edwards, *Psychic Healing*, 10s. by post; *A Guide to Spirit Healing*, 11s. by post, and *The Evidence for Spirit Healing*, 15s. 6d. by post, all obtainable from Spiritualist Press, 48, Old Bailey, London, E.C.4.

Harry Edwards is the author of *The Mediumship of Jack Webber*, 13s. by post and *The Science of Spirit Healing*, 11s. by post, obtainable from Burrows Lea, Shere, Surrey.

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