

his reply to my review of his book, which I evidently did not make quite clear.

Mr Cohen queries my remark that his letter No. 5 (from Frank Whitaker to Price) makes it clear that Price did some editing before publication, in spite of his claim that his account was 'verbatim and uncorrected'. The point is simply that Whitaker quotes a passage from Price's account (evidently the original version) which he says is misleading, and in the final published version this passage turns out to have been duly amended. Therefore Price did some touching up though he pretended not to have done so. This was a bad habit of his, though not, so far as I know, amounting to dishonesty. Another instance occurs in 'The End of Borley Rectory', when he purports to reproduce Lieutenant Nawrocki's report (written, Price claimed, in 'perfect English'), without revealing that the perfection of the English was in part due to himself! I am indebted to Mr R. J. Hastings for letting me see a photostat of this report.

The second point concerns my remark that Mr Cohen did not acknowledge Mr Hastings's prior publication of the letter of Mrs Clarice Richards. I had not overlooked the reference on p. 119 of Mr Cohen's book, but this is merely a note under a general heading 'Other References to "The Spiritualists"' (i.e. to Mr Trevor Hall's book on Crookes) and would in no way make it known to the uninformed reader that Mr Hastings had made an important and prior contribution to the Rosalie case.

These are points of detail, and do not affect the interest of Mr Cohen's book, part of the value of which, as I said in my review, lies in the reproduction in full of the evidence available to him.

R. G. MEDHURST

#### *A Dutch eyewitness of 'Katie King'*

SIR,—As supplementary evidence and a contribution to the further documentation of the Crookes-Florence Cook-'Katie King' case, I would like to place on record the experience of the only Dutch eye-witness of that so controversial phenomenon: the materialization of 'Katie King', an eye-witness who also had the rare privilege of perceiving medium and phantom together.

The eye-witness was Mr A. J. Riko, a prominent Dutch psychical researcher who flourished during the latter half of the 19th century. He experimented with a number of well-known physical mediums (e.g. Williams) whom he invited to come over to Holland and demonstrate spiritual intercourse with the dead, and he enjoyed a good reputation as an objective and critical researcher—of course

according to the standards of the spiritualistic seventies. In his last book<sup>1</sup> Riko tells us about a sitting he had with Florrie Cook as the medium, presumably at the London house of Florrie's parents.

'In England I attended a very important séance with Florence Cook. Of course, every conceivable precaution against fraud had been taken. Only three strangers were present, i.e. my wife, our well-known compatriot, Mr Mathezer Tiedeman, [a prominent Spiritualist who had induced D. D. Home to give a series of sittings in the Netherlands attended by a number of sceptical scientists (1858)], and myself. 'Katie' showed herself several times in the room with a good light burning. In the meantime the medium moved about and sighed behind the curtain. Finally I was invited to come to the medium. I stood next to her chair and just in front of me stood the materialization. The latter took hold of my hand and requested me to convince myself that Florence Cook was wearing ornaments in her ears, while she, Katie, had nothing in her ears. Which I did to my complete satisfaction.

Nobody could enter the smaller apartment where the medium was seated. The doors of the room and of the cupboards were properly locked and pasted over at the inside so that if they had been opened it would have been discovered when the sitting came to an end. Well, everything was found perfectly in order. It was during this visit to England that I made the acquaintance of the learned Mr Crookes.

Let me add that later on I was in the position to perceive this same materialization several times when Florence Cook's sister, Kate, who was also a medium of the greatest importance, visited 'The Netherlands' (pp. 230-31).

It is a pity that I have not been able to find any printed report of Katie Cook's séances in Holland. It is probable that some at least of these were held in Riko's house.

The lack of printed reports is probably due to the fact that in those days (1875-1880) no Dutch periodicals existed entirely devoted to Spiritualism as was the case in England. The controversies in this field were generally fought out in pamphlets.

It is a remarkable fact that Riko seems to be convinced that Kate's phantom was the same one he saw at Florrie Cook's sitting he attended in London. As far as I am aware of—but I may be mistaken—no such a conviction was felt in England at the time, though the manifestations at Florrie's and Kate's séances were similar in many ways.

Finally, I would like to point out that Mr Riko was in all probability the only Dutchman to whom Crookes forwarded copies

<sup>1</sup> Riko, A. J., *Het onderzoek van spiritualistische verschijnselen en vreemde feiten*. 's-Gravenhage, 1906.

of Katie King's photographs. There were six different photos. Riko described them as follows:

1. 'Katie' standing up, with hands and arms crossed over her chest. [This one Riko reproduces on p. 228 of his book.]
2. The same figure stepping out of the cabinet.
3. 'Katie' *en buste*, somewhat larger and more *en profile*.
4. Larger photo *en buste*, down to the knees. 'Katie' with her hands on Crookes' head. The latter sitting in front of 'Katie' in a crouching position.
5. 'Katie' walking in the room arm in arm with Crookes.
6. The same but larger and more distinct. In a somewhat different position.

What became of these photos I do not know.

G. ZORAB

### *The Jones Boys*

SIR,—In Mr Fraser Nicol's review of Trevor Hall's *The Strange Case of Edmund Gurney (International Journal of Parapsychology, Winter 1966)*, he rightly castigates Hall for dismissing as fraudulent experiments with a 'Miss B.' carried out in 1889-92 by Mrs Sidgwick and Miss Johnson, while omitting to describe the best-controlled of these experiments. Fraser Nicol comments on these experiments: 'As for fraud methods, I have thought up a few systems whereby perhaps Miss B's feats might be normally explained' (p. 52).

Earlier in his paper Fraser Nicol refers to 'the alleged "telepathy" powers of the fraudulent Jones boys' (p. 18). Will Mr Fraser Nicol please explain what are his reasons for dismissing the results of Soal's experiments with the Jones boys as fraudulent. Is it simply that Mr C. E. M. Hansel afterwards thought up a method by which he considered that the experimenters could have been deceived? In that case, shouldn't Fraser Nicol dismiss Miss B. as fraudulent on the ground that he has thought up a system whereby she might have cheated?

Mrs Goldney has recorded (this *Journal*, March 1960, p. 272) that she shares my own opinion that the Jones boys did not use the method of cheating suggested by Hansel, and she has pointed out that this opinion is shared by most, if not all, of those who repeatedly saw high scoring. I invite Fraser Nicol to explain those features of the experiments on which I based this opinion in my review of *The Mind Readers* (this *Journal*, June 1959, pp. 84-96, and especially, pp. 92-96).

C. W. K. MUNDLE