

DOWSING ADVENTURES IN THE LAND OF THE JESUITS*

BY SIR CHRISTOPHER GIBSON, B.T.

This is the first bit of "serious" writing on radiesthesia which I have indulged in for over five months. After an appalling experience in the town of Carmelo in October at the hands of the Chief of the Investigation Dept. of Police, who had wanted a finger in the pie of the Golden Bell and had framed me on a trumped up charge in order to try to make me "talk," I resolved to cut out psychic radiesthesia for the time being and concentrate on physical dowsing, as well as purely material or business matters "on the business wave-length." How mistaken I was to adopt this attitude will be shown in the following record.

But my newly adopted mental attitude seemed to me at the time to be having a very salutary effect, not only in the purely material things but in my dowsing as well. At the worst of times I had never had any difficulty at all with water, and now, between October, 1951, and January, 1952, I had located no fewer than 14 underground springs—two of them artesian, and one of these two located at a considerable distance from a sketch of the place and a map of the route leading to it, without my visiting the locality at all, in all cases accurately forecasting depth, volume and quality. But as I barely got thanks for these time-wasting and exhausting favours—for every other person living in those far-flung, beautiful, forest-girt and wicked lands is a half-baked dowser of sorts, treating the subject with the greatest disrespect and invariably trying to get "something for nothing"—I now started offering my services professionally in more "civilized" quarters, including a long discussion with the Governor of Misiones, who treated my suggestions with the greatest (and intelligent) courtesy. For I intended to avoid the mistake made by other local rhabdomants, by charging a fee commensurate with the amount of work involved on results and not beforehand, the only prior charge being travelling and maintenance expenses.

But apart from water and the tough peach rod I invariably used for the purpose, the development of my E.S.P. or *psi* faculties appeared to be forging ahead in other directions from constant experimentation with the pendulum. I had ever been keenly interested in the benevolent occupation of South America by the Jesuits and their trails—marked at intervals by their incredible "reductions"†—which led from Brazil across Misiones and

* Paraguay was dominated by the Jesuits from 1605 to 1769.—Ed.

† Settlements of Indians made by the missionaries.—Ed.

Paraguay to Bolivia, this interest becoming greatly enhanced when I learned by means of E.S.P. that the most direct trail leading from the Brazilian reduction of Santa Rosa to the Misiones reduction of San Ignacio (patron saint of the Jesuit Order), had passed slap over the spot where my little house at "Punta Porá" now stood—an item which I was subsequently able to confirm as historical fact. These data very naturally led to thoughts of buried Jesuit treasure—again indisputably confirmed by historical facts—which, coupled with the "natural" gold, copper, graphite, mineral crystals galore, ancient Indian burial grounds, &c., &c., &c., with which the whole district positively bristles, is extremely liable to lead the dowser into spiritual by-paths unless he can keep a strong curb on his emotions. The vivid scenery also with its verdant foliage, its wealth of wild flowers, flowering creepers and trees, its forest-clad hills, its countless purling streams, the majesty of its great rivers, its red soil and, above all, its billions of breath-taking butterflies, further contribute to this dowser's paradise—but let him watch his step for it also bristles with superstition, with Black Magic and with countless (and highly dramatic) "reflections" of the past.

Between June, 1950, and July, 1951, I had recorded about 200,000 carefully chosen words dealing with this immense subject—and at the end of it I felt I had got hardly anywhere at all; I felt I was being side-tracked in all directions by the Shades of the past who were having a jolly good laugh at my expense! Which only confirmed me all the more in my determination to concentrate on *physical* dowsing as opposed to the *psychical*.

Considerable support to this determination, and enhanced accuracy in practice, came to me at the beginning of January when the local *colectivero* (bus-driver) lent me M. Pierre Béasse's book on physical rhabdomancy for a few days, which explained in kindergarten language a number of phenomena which I had realized existed through "the hard way" of practical experience, but for whose manifestation I had been unable to supply an adequate reason. Above all, the book explained the theory and the tragedy of *Images*—apart from "reflections" (as in a mirror), refraction, dispersion and conductability to which the radio-magnetic-electric waves emitted by all substances are subject; apart from noxious or dangerous waves which may even kill the incautious dowser and are attributed by these superstitious people to "acts of the devil."

Up till that moment I had been most sorely perplexed by certain events which had taken place in June, 1951. Why was it that I could have sworn on my dying oath that that Golden Bell did definitely lie buried at Vicente Chamorro's place in Carmelo, even being able to tell its size, shape and weight and from which quarter it had been brought, foretelling the tragic circumstances surrounding its interment on Francisco Solano Lopez's

orders at the outbreak of the Paraguayan War*, all of which was subsequently confirmed as historical fact from certain documentary evidence discovered? Why was it that when the dig was started and the required depth had been reached, I suddenly *knew* with a blinding shock that the bell was no longer there but had been subsequently removed back to a place quite close to where it had originally come from—the old church—being rehidden in some cellars of Jesuit origin, again on Lopez's orders as the Allies closed in and the end of the War drew near? Why was it that I put my finger on the exact spot where the bell had been rehidden (which led to the trouble with the Police in spite of the fact that my friends had obtained permission from the Paraguayan Government to explore these Municipal lands); that I was forced to tell Don Vicente the hideously disappointing truth but could give the poor old chap no really adequate explanation then as to why we should have seemingly been in error at the outset (for Chamorro is also a capable pendulum rhabdomant by psychic means and had endorsed all my findings)?

All the foregoing had been perceived by purely *psychic* radiesthesia—clairvoyance-audience-sentience. It was only when I delved into M. Béasse's book that I learned the physical aspects of the case. For it seems that when a treasure of gold—which has a far stronger "pull" for the dowser than most of the other metals and minerals—has lain buried for a prolonged number of years in a given place, and is then subsequently removed, providing the dig is filled in again the exact "image" of the treasure will remain indefinitely afterwards, deluding even the most capable of rhabdomants who will swear that it is still there when, in point of fact, it has already been removed. This was what had happened in Carmelo, and I cannot help feeling that this is what had happened in regard to the search for the great treasure in Montevideo which has been given such world-wide publicity.

Once I had grasped these physical details, I referred back to my careful and faithful records of the events mentioned above, and at once noticed a fundamental psychic detail whose significance had escaped me up till that moment. For the spirit of the bell-ringer had told me in clairaudience, before the dig was started, the exact and literal truth; he did not say we would find the bell there—it was we, in our excitement, who took the matter for granted by implication.

* The war, which started in 1864, was the result of a dispute between Francisco Solano Lopez and the Brazilian Government. Lopez marched an army through Argentine territory to invade southern Brazil, whereupon the Governments of Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina combined to suppress him. On March 1st, 1870, the Paraguayan forces were totally defeated at Aquidaban and Lopez was killed. During the war the population of Paraguay was reduced from about one and a third million to 221,000.—Ed.

That night, at Punta Porá on 15th June, I had an extraordinarily vivid dream which I felt must be tremendously important: I dreamed that there were two small white wooden houses with a narrow space between them and a level green stretch of open land beyond. I turned into the right-hand house which consisted of a single room: there was a huge pile of earth in it.

On the morning of the 21st, by some mysterious means, the trail led me across the Alto Parana River to Carmelo. I thought I was going to be "taken" to the Jesuit ruins of the colossal reduction of Jesús, or Trinidad (which is opposite to Corpus on the Argentine side). But it wasn't, nor was it to San Ignacio Gauzú del Paraguay—these will have to wait until a later date. No, instead I was led to the *two little white wooden houses* of kindly Vicente Chamorro, a watch-maker, whose brother had accompanied me and who, I had learned, knew all my old "hunting-grounds" in Paraguay and as far as Miranda Estancia in Matto Grosso!

"But it is *here* you want me," I stated simply. "Besides, I've been here before—it was in 1937 when I had to spend a day because the port had been closed on account of a yellow fever scare. But you were not here then and I didn't know then why I had to come . . . there is something missing from your garden."

"You are right on all counts," replied Don Vicente in a perfectly matter-of-fact way. "We only bought this house in 1941. The gap you notice in the garden is caused by the big *angico* tree we cut down last year. And——"

"Don't say it—you want me to get up that great golden Jesuit bell that weighs 400 kilos," I interrupted. "But wont the Authorities interfere?"

"Ah, no, it is not like it is on the other side of the River; besides, this is my own property and I am known to be a poor but devout man who would give one-third of anything found to *beneficiencia*."

"Then what are you waiting for?" I said irritably. Things were coming hot off the bat with a vengeance now! "The bell-ringer, whose name was Kuimba-e-Pirú (The Thin Man) and who helped Padre Arturo to bury the bell, wants you to hurry, wants you to know the truth, man!"

. . . . "The church wasn't where it is now," I resumed, before we had started to dig at all. "It was further to the left," I pointed, and subsequently learned that I had been right. "Below and to the right of the present church used to be the plantations of *yerua mate*, below the old church were the orange groves, and below both and running down to the River—including this very spot—were the open paddocks with Criollo cattle grazing on them. About 1860 the Jesuit Padre Arturo got orders from Lopez

to bury his wonderful golden bell, which had been donated by an immensely wealthy Englishman in the time of the Dictator Francia as a token of gratitude to the Church which had saved his life: it was not rung, but hung in the church in a prominent position for all to see. There was no special hurry: Padre Arturo and his bell-ringer, Kuimba-e-Pirú, lesiurely set about digging the great hole to the traditional and considerable depth of three metres—it is even deeper now because about half a metre has been added through soil having been washed down this gentle slope by the rains over a period of nearly a century. . . . On the afternoon of the second day they brought the bell down from the church in a *carreta* and interred it with due ceremony. But it was getting late when the bell was interred, so they only filled in a little earth before knocking off. . . . That night a man, clad in a military cloak, came pelting down the hill after a Guaraní girl and caught her at this corner where your pendulum draws you so strongly, Don Vicente. He grabbed her by the hair and then raped and murdered her with his machete: just at that moment an Indian tried to come to her defence—he rushed from the direction of that *angico* tree you cut down, but got the same machete in his guts for his pains. The assassin then threw both bodies into the great bell-pit and shovelled a little earth on top of them, hoping that the difference in level would not be noticed. It wasn't. Next day Padre Arturo and Kuimba-e-Pirú came along to finish filling in the hole. There was plenty of time, and, when there was still about 80 centimetres to be filled up, The Thin Man thought he would improve the shining hour by levelling down the long grass and weeds which grew in profusion about the place with his machete. But as the poor fellow bent down to cut yet another swathe of that rank growth, he was suddenly bitten in the wrist by an *mboi-chini* (rattlesnake) *there*—” as I held out my arm and pointed to the spot on my wrist, “The whole hand and arm swelled up and turned black up to the shoulder.” Vicente exclaimed in horror; but I shook myself—and everything became normal again.

“Thus died loyal Kuimba-e-Pirú,” I resumed presently. “So Padre Arturo buried him above his beloved bell. Don't you see, he wants us to have up everything, at once—to learn the truth. He is telling me right now that there is nothing to fear—all he asks is that we collect as many of his and the other bones as possible—we'll come on his remains at 1.20 metres—and afterwards give them Christian re-burial. . . . Haven't you got a couple of strong young men, preferably of your family, who would be willing to help?”

(This fantastic story may sound like the ravings of a lunatic to the uninitiated—but old Chamorro just kept on nodding, for he understood perfectly well what was happening).

“There are my two nephews—I’ll send for them at once,” he said—and was as good as his word. “But this open space, now,” he resumed presently. “Do you think I should board it off? We agree that the centre of the bell lies midway between the two houses, a total distance of three metres, and we don’t want to have the whole *pueblo* gaping at us. But—I have it! We’ll dig in the room, under the window, and then tunnel outwards beneath this space afterwards!”

I expostulated in vain. It was the same room of my dream, of course; in a few minutes that same great mound of earth would start piling up in it. But as I knew “it had to be,” I held my peace when the young men, duly arrived, started tearing up the flooring bricks and digging a long wide trench under the window.

The sun was setting when, about 90 minutes later, the boys—working like galley-slaves, for they were just as keen as everyone else to see if my prophecies were going to come true—reached Kuimba-e-Perú’s skeleton at a depth of precisely 1.20 metres, reverently collecting as many of the bones as they could. A powerful vapour lamp was then brought, and the work was proceeding steadily when I suddenly ran out, pointed, and said: “You have a very bad neighbour over there who has got wind of what you are doing and is ill-wishing you.”

“She is indeed a bad neighbour,” replied Mrs. C. quietly, “but now that we know we can keep her evil thoughts at a distance.”

Signs galore were now coming up—signs that the earth had been moved. First it might be some cinders, then a little piece of rotting *incienso* wood, or a pebble that was entirely out of place. The earth had become frightfully hard and tight-packed, and we had now commenced to tunnel outwards under the narrow space between the two houses; but those boys were working magnificently, and that great pile of earth steadily mounted higher and higher.

At about 10.30 p.m. we knocked off for a bite of supper, having now been joined by the Chamorros’ daughter and her nice young husband, to whom I took an immediate liking. And it was then that the most dramatic event of a day packed with drama took place. The seven of us were sitting round the table in the little outdoor patio in the strong light of the vapour lamp, when suddenly all of us heard the Man come pelting down the hill. I shouted to the girl who was cooking the supper for her to join us, and then went out to face what I knew was coming. I knew that what was to come was only a “reflection” of that tragedy which had happened in the dim past, now being re-enacted because we were learning the truth, for I felt absolutely no unease at all. But it was certainly dramatic enough in all conscience. . . . The Man caught the Guaraní Girl at that corner which had so

strongly drawn Chamarro. . . . It was all over a few moments later, and I rejoined the little party where they sat in a tense silence round the table. They were white-faced but calm. They had heard everything whose interpretation there could be no mistaking : I had both seen and heard everything.

Then we threw off the megrims and resumed the dig with a will. We worked all through the night. Dawn was streaking the sky when we began to reach the fossilized—but again scattered—remains of the Indian girl and boy at a depth of 2.20 metres, for owing to the geological formation and fall of the strata at that depth the constant action of water during the past century had produced this effect. Moreover, the boys had gone wild with excitement when, a few minutes earlier, they thought they had reached the knob of the bell until I had been obliged to disillusion them.

All of us were utterly exhausted and were forced to knock off at 8 a.m. on Friday, 22nd June, for there was still about another metre to go. I felt desperately sorry to leave these grand people with the job still unfinished ; but I had to make the connection with the flying boat by which I had already booked to Buenos Aires.

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A month later I returned to Carmelo, and was obliged to break the news as gently as I could to poor Don Vicente as to what had really happened to the golden bell itself—how in 1866 it had been disinterred at Lopez's orders, taken back along the track by which it had been brought, and hidden in the vaults of Jesuit origin which lay near the site of the old church (long since demolished) which now constituted Municipal land which had not yet been built over. I tried to salve my conscience and mitigate the bitter disappointment by pointing out the exact spot where I believed the bell was now hidden, together with four small caskets containing gold coins which had formed part of Lopez's treasure, to Chamorro and three of his most intimate friends—all sincere spiritualists ; and was most intrigued to note that certain "get-rich-quick" dowsers had dug a network of enormous trenches in the vicinity, making it look like a veritable battlefield, but the nearest of these was fully 50 yards distant from my spot. For during the past year I have noticed again and again and with increasing force that when I—who am at least wholly sincere and disinterested in this enthralling science—am watched by an avaricious, egoistical or unbelieving person while I am trying to locate some object of material value, although I know that object to be in the vicinity I also know it will be quite impossible to have it up while the ill-wisher is scheming to pinch it all for himself. Whereupon I lose my temper, read him a short but pithy lecture and "pack up." How much more so, then, that an evil person who also happens to be a natural

rhabdomant, can never find that which he seeks so feverishly. If the hundreds of natural dowers scattered throughout Misiones and Paraguay were of a different caste and spiritual temperament, not five cents of the vast wealth lying there—as it does—would have remained to tell the tale today.

But this is a digression. One of Chamorro's intimates, whose grandfather had been close to Lopez throughout the Paraguayan War, then proceeded to check through a trunkful of aged correspondence which had been written at that time, and, after much labour, found confirmation of my version of the story of the Golden Bell; but the site of its reinterment was not specified because Lopez had ordered the four men who had done the job in secret to be murdered. Whereupon Dr. C. applied for—and obtained—authorization from the Paraguayan Government to search for possible buried treasure in these Municipal lands, and which in turn had led to the trouble I had last October with the Chief of the local C.I.D. on account of Envy and Avarice rearing their ugly heads again.

I should have known in the first place, of course, that no bell would be forthcoming at Chamorro's dig, from the fact that the three skeletons had been broken up when the bell was removed and hurled back haphazard when the hole was refilled. No wonder these three spirits craved Christian reburial for their mortal remains, no wonder Kuimba-e-Pirú had imposed this inflexible condition before I was permitted to arrive at the truth as to where the bell really was. But I was able to make some reparation to Chamorro before leaving him on this second visit, for I located a beautiful underground spring for him at a depth of 9 metres on a part of his property which had hitherto been waterless and which he was trying to sell, thereby greatly enhancing its value.

But I still had one more terrible shock in store for me—presumably at the beginning of January, still very groggy from the after-effects of my illness, I had started to dig at that spot about 100 yards above the Watch Tower at Punta Porá and close to the river bank, where I felt convinced the 80 kilo casket with its three handles and hoard of gold church furniture (known as the Black Monk's Treasure), stolen from the Jesuit reductions of San Javier during its invasion by the Spaniards and brought by them up-river in a canoe by night, had finally been buried here at a depth of nearly three metres, about one metre having been added during the years by silt washed up by the Alto Uruguay when in flood.

Upon clearing the place of its riotous undergrowth, I found it was just one solid, impenetrable mass of what are known as "cats' claws"—infinitely worse than the worst bramble patch one could visualize, and distinctly poisonous into the bargain. At last we started to dig, and at a depth of 1½ metres uncovered two

shards of blackened, thinnish Indian burial urn, surrounded by a sticky substance like tar. Whereupon the pull on my pendulum shifted about a metre to the right (perhaps if I had known about "the solar plane" at the time, subsequently reading about this and kindred subjects in l'Abbé Alexis Bouly's fascinating little article which appeared in *Radio-Perception* for September, 1951, I might have been saved some of the heart-ache I experienced afterwards). So we set about making a second hole which overlapped the first, and, at a depth of nearly two metres this time, uncovered two more shards of a much thicker burial urn, whereupon the "pull" once more shifted another metre or so and again to the right.

So we dug yet a third hole overlapping the second to a depth of two metres where the pull on my pendulum now remained constant, and left it at that for the time being; for I had become very troubled at the seeming inaccuracy of my initial location from the vertical waves emitted by what I sought, plus the fact that only four fragments of these two separate urns had been found, plus the fact that the soil was suspiciously loose and seemed to have been moved far too recently for my liking, plus the knowledge I had gained through bitter practical experience about "images" though at that time I could not put a name to it.

Then along came M. Béasse's book, from which I learned all about images together with the fact that—amongst other substances—all kinds of baked earth—porcelain, pottery, bricks, &c.—are impervious to the vertical waves emitted by metals and minerals, and, when placed directly above the object sought, may reflect the vertical waves exactly like a mirror and according to the angle of incidence, so that these shards of pottery might well have produced a double reflection. Again and again similar sorts of cases had been cropping up, which had sorely puzzled me until I learned about Reflection, Refraction, &c., in dowsing.

Now, with this book the *colectivero* lent me a Schumfell detector which is described in it, and which is claimed to eliminate images. It is a kind of "super-pendulum" consisting of a hollow metal ring to which is fixed a small compass, and handles beautifully. First of all I tested it over a number of different kinds of prospects I had already located with my own pendulums—home-made gadgets comprising wood, crystal, lead encased in brass, and certain positive metals. In all cases the Schumfell Detector confirmed my previous findings, but with—how shall I put it—a finer shade of exactitude.

At length, satisfied that I had really got the hang of the thing, I tested it over the dig, where it confirmed that an 80-kilo casket or box with three handles, approximately 1.20 metres long by half a metre wide did, in effect, lie buried there at a

depth of three metres. I checked with and without the gold witness in my right hand, I checked with the witness in my left hand to produce the anti-clockwise gyration, I checked the "series," I checked with half-a-dozen different waves and rays, and I checked by psychic methods which are not in "the book of the words" at all. Then I re-checked and cross-checked everything with my own pendulums and with my stout peach rod, being nearly pitch-forked into the hole by the latter. And in all cases the answers were the same.

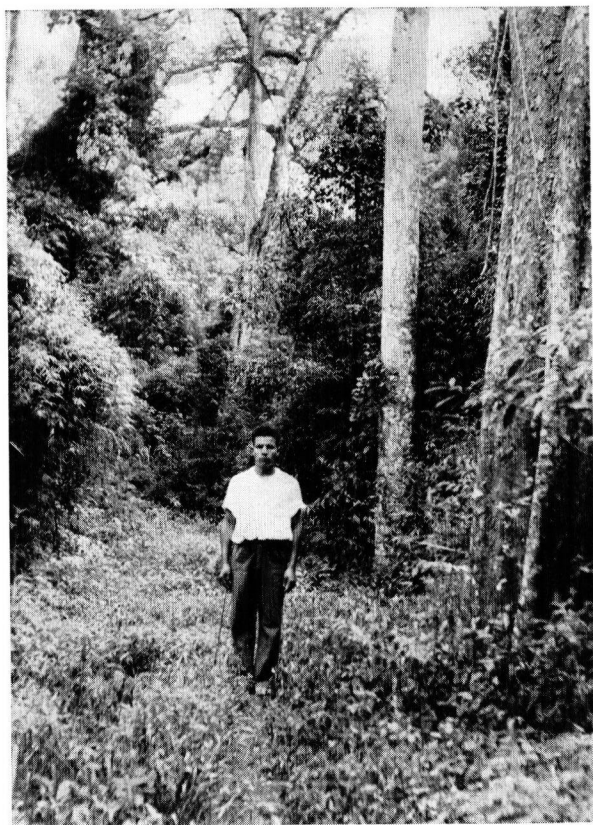
After a short prayer and blessing the place with holy water (for my companion was a Catholic), without further ado Cirilo Morales and I set about removing that last metre of soil, which started to come up loosely—too loosely—mixed with fragments of charcoal and burnt earth. Then we went through a narrow strata of yellowish clay in which there were signs of copper and verdigris; and then once more the loose reddish soil. At the required depth of three metres, and with nothing at all to show for our efforts, I once more examined the sides and bottom of the dig with the Schumfell Detector. To my profound horror and dismay, the "pull" had entirely disappeared. I repeated the sundry tests with my own various pendulums, but the same blankly negative wall confronted me, nor did anything at all "come" through clairvoyance-audience-sentience; was this because I had determined to use purely physical means in order to avoid being led into "spiritual bypaths?"

Poor Cirilo was on the verge of tears, and I was in little better shape when a sudden thought struck me. Acting feverishly upon it, we shovelled back about 70 centimetres of soil and, once more making the usual tests, lo and behold, once more that infernal image had formed in all its perfection, exactly as if the real thing had been there. Again we removed that 70 centimetres of earth, and again the image vanished. Subsequent enquiries that I made of the oldest native inhabitants in the district went to show that about thirty years ago—long before Panambi came into being—a party of Englishmen, two of whom were known to be capable water dowers and were "always playing about with queer instruments," who were working the timber on that particular stretch of the Rio Alto Uruguay, suddenly disappeared without a word of warning from the area which now comprises Punta Porá, abandoning a considerable capital of felled logs in the forest and presumably taking with them the stolen Jesuit treasure.

Be that as it may, for some reason which I cannot yet comprehend, the Schumfell Detector did—does—not eliminate images for me: perhaps my chemical or physical make-up is not suited to its use. But what I *did* feel was that with this disastrous experience I had learned my bitter lesson to the full; that it is imperative for me to combine psychical with physical dowsing



The author testing the Schumfell detector
over the "Black Monk's Treasure."



Cirilo Morales on the forest path leading to his father's farm

in order for me to obtain 100 per cent. satisfactory results; and that if I observe this rule there will be no more failures of a similar nature.

The fact remains that, once I had grasped this principle which seems to be fundamental to my well-being, life at once assumed a rosier hue and my dowsing accuracy became greatly increased. As I now realised, my purely psychic faculties had been constantly struggling for an outlet during the whole of this five-month period: now I became enabled to foretell accurately whether it was "natural" gold (as opposed to gold treasure), or Indian remains, or crystals, or copper, &c., &c., that one was going to find; or whether the interested party was being led into some side-issue by a reflection of the past (e.g., a "ghost"), in which case I could tell him at once what had happened. The Treasures of Gold must wait until later; but some of the factual results obtained in one brief month were as follows:—

(1). There are a considerable number of tiny veins of gold embedded in strata of rock in the Panambi district, usually coupled with small deposits of copper, and in totally insufficient volume to make their working worth while (one usually needs a magnifying glass to distinguish them), but which will nevertheless attract the attention of the dowser who is looking for gold, and which, in certain cases and at widely spaced intervals, appear to emit gases which ignite on contact with the air (like marsh gas), being seen at night and reported on with considerable embroidery by the local rustics from time to time, I personally having witnessed this phenomenon on two occasions.

(a) I was taken to a spot at the back of Farm 62B by Nena and Severiano Olivera where they had seen "a great bluish-white ball of fire shoot up into the trees and then disintegrate in all directions." I must confess it was a likely looking place with a great cactus growing by, one of whose arms curved downwards in a wide arc and pointed at the exact spot when my pendulum told me there was gold. But I told my companions that it was but a tiny vein of natural gold, embedded in a layer of rock which would be found at a depth of only a few inches. Ten minutes' work sufficed to show that I had been right on all counts: the facts were so obvious that there could be no argument about it; and, only pausing to make sure the microscopic atom we had scraped out really *was* gold, without further ado we just packed up and went home.

(b) A similar case occurred with my nice Swedish neighbours, Mrs. and Miss Karlsted (both good water rhabdomants); but in this case I accurately foretold them that the strata of living rock would be found at a depth of two metres.

(c) One day Reynaldo Damien called me urgently to his Farm, No. 187—for news travels fast by "the grape vine" in those wild distant places and my fame was beginning to spread,

because on the previous night he and his wife had seen "the lights." When I reached his farm I pointed at the exact spot where they had seen the light *before* they had told me ; and, upon examining the place, informed Damien and his nice but gaping family that a microscopic amount of *gold dust* would be found in sandstone at a depth of 1.20 metres, together with signs of copper ; that no living rock would be encountered but a bit deeper they would come upon a strata of tough greyish clay in which were embedded some pretty stones and crystals, including amethysts and "baby" diamonds which would cut glass.—While all this did come to pass, the joke was that all the time I was being most strongly drawn to a spot about 30 yards distant on the neighbour's farm, where I felt a real treasure of Jesuit origin was buried.

(2). Cirilo's father, old Morales, is a remarkable if ancient character, who is strongly clairvoyant and possesses other E.S.P. faculties, but fails when it comes to "common or garden" dowsing. He looks after Mr. A.'s Farm No. 1—approached by an outstandingly beautiful forest path—and for long had dreamed of the spectre which walks from the great *Canna fistola* tree to a spot on the bank of the Arroyo Segredo where it joins the River Alto Uruguay and forms the limit to his garden.

After allowing a whole month to elapse, the old man told me of his dream about the spectre in very convincing language, inviting me to examine the place for him next day on the pretext that he would get no rest until the ghost had been laid. Nothing loth, I examined the small level area—about four acres—very thoroughly, and formed the following conclusions: the whole area had once formed a very ancient Indian encampment, burials taking place all the way along the banks of the Segredo and as far as the *Canna fistola* tree. Subsequently a cloaked white man—almost certainly a Jesuit—came and built a brick house in their midst, directly on the line of the "Spectre's Walk." I told old Morales that I thought two or more Indians were buried at the foot of the *Canna fistola* ! another was buried in a great urn at the other extreme of the "walk" by the river bank ; and where the brick house had once stood—I marked the exact spot for him—a tragedy had occurred after the white man had left the encampment, the murdered Indian girl—whose ghost it was that walked—having been buried there together with her little gold trinkets ; and that if he dug there he would find bits of broken bricks and other indisputable signs at a depth of 1.20 metres. But I also warned him about "despoiling sepulchres"—about which he understood just as much and more than I did—suggesting that he should send for me after he reached the bricks.

Old Morales hummed and hawed, finally deciding to have a whack at the spot on the river bank as a kind of compromise



with his conscience, and because he rightly thought that the digging would be easier there. Sure enough, in due course up came the shards of an immensely thick, and no doubt extremely ancient, burial urn, so strongly impregnated with the grease of the dead that it took me two hours to clean it properly in order to bring out its beautiful deep red colour; but the other human remains had long since reverted to their primaeval dust. And there was nothing else.

Next day we started on the house site; it was heavy going, for the soil had obviously been stamped and trampled on for many years in days gone by, being interlarded with layers of ashes and other debris from the camp fires, and rounded stones brought up from the River Uruguay for the purpose of roasting or baking. And at 1.20 metres we came to the broken bricks.

I was then called to Posadas on urgent business, where everything seemed to go wrong and put me into a frenzy of frustration. The simultaneous and stunning news of our splendid King's death didn't tend to help matters. It was not until a week later that I was free to return to Panambi, in the sure and certain knowledge that somehow or other old Morales had tried to double-cross me and was now paying dearly for his sins. When I reached home, Dona Maria (the old Finnish woman who keeps house for me) casually mentioned that Morales had filled in the dig "because he expected his *patrón* at any moment and did not want him to be suspicious" (which I knew to be a lie), and that his daughter—Cirilo's sister—had sold Dona Maria a pair of heavy gold earrings for the ridiculous sum of \$7 pesos (about 2s. 6d.), enjoining her to strict secrecy at her father's request. Maria had then become uneasy and had despatched the earrings post-haste as a present to a niece. For the truth was that old Morales, unable to resist the temptation when it was presented before his eyes, *had* despoiled a sepulchre and then became so conscience-stricken that he hurriedly filled in the dig and had then tried to "pass the spiritual buck" to Maria through his daughter. I felt rather sorry for the old boy because, knowing perfectly well that I knew all about the incident on account of his own well-developed *psi* faculties, proceeded to shun me like the plague until I cornered him one day and had it out with him. Maria is now trying to retrieve those earrings, for they must be returned to the place whence they came. And incidentally, they constitute the first gold "treasure" for whose discovery I was directly responsible.

(3). It came to me as an extremely pleasant and wholly unexpected surprise when the Argentine Government acceded to my request for permission to search for possible hidden treasure in the wonderful Jesuit reduction of San Ignacio, with police protection and under the supervision of the local Judge to see that

there is fair play, under certain Articles which deal with treasure-hunting contained in the *Código Civil*. Many other rhabdomants have wanted to get this permission but have been scared to apply for it, thinking it would be a case of "off with his head" if such interest became known to the authorities. I have very good reasons for believing that there *is* vast treasure hidden at San Ignacio and I feel that in this I shall not fail, for the events which preceded my first prospect and led me directly to these magnificent ruins, are far too extraordinary and significant for them to have any other meaning than that I shall succeed. And even if I were fleeced, I should have succeeded in a big way and upheld my faith, with which I should be wholly content. My three working companions have already been bespoken, and we hope to make a start about 5th April.

THE DIVINING ROD

BY W. MACLEAN HOMAN

It is now forty years since I first saw the Divining Rod used. I had gone with a friend to Telemarken in Norway to inspect a china clay deposit and see if it was a workable proposition. The farmer who owned the deposit, in order to show us where there was an underground stream of water, cut a forked twig and let us see how it bent downwards when he crossed the ground above the stream. He walked with bent knees on which his elbows rested and with rigid muscles, holding the forked twig horizontally in front of him with both his hands. I tried doing as the farmer had done and found that the underground stream affected me as it had done him. After that I made a number of experiments and I found that the Divining Rod could indicate not only underground water but also outcrops of ore. It reacted when one walked with it over a recumbent person as well as over clothes that had been worn. In a railway carriage it dipped whenever the train passed over a culvert or stream. I made a number of people take part in my experiments and I found that about one half of these were affected in the same way as I was, while the remainder were not. It appeared to be some sort of instinct which was more in evidence in some people than in others. Beyond that I did not get.