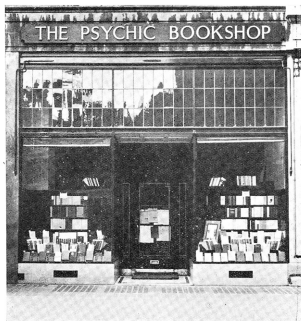


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# Psychic Bookshop Museum & Press

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## BROADSHEET 7.

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**I**T is sad when one has to lower one's ideals. And yet it is well to have them. If you aim at the moon you may hit a mountain top. But one feels inwardly saddened by anything short of one's dream.

That dream in my case, and that of my wife, was a central dépôt which would be on the best site in London, and which would supply psychic literature of all kinds and information to all comers. We were prepared to pay all expenses ourselves for three or four years, reckoning with confidence that at the end of that time it would be paying its own way. Then, after we had recouped ourselves for what we had paid, it would have been handed over to trustees, who would run it for the general good of the cause.

All this is now changed though most of the programme was carried out. The site was found; it was well appointed and well stocked. Everything was done by us which could ensure success. It has been a world's centre, and folk of all nations meet under its roof. All this has been according to plan. But, alas! at the end of nearly four years there has been no return for several thousands of pounds sunk in the business, nor do the figures reassure us as to the future.

What is the reason of this? It is a very evident one. Nearly every psychic paper here, in the Colonies or in America, is itself dependent for its revenue on the sale of books. They have free advertising facilities, whereas we pay heavily for the same. On the top of this they buy in many cases what are called "remainders," where the unsold portion of an edition is got rid of by publishers at a nominal price. In such cases they can undersell anyone who is handling ordinary copies, and can leave an impression

that the latter is an overcharge. Besides the psychic papers, nearly all the Psychic Societies sell books. Thus there is no room for a bookshop which devotes itself entirely to that one object.

This is not stated by way of complaint. So long as the books reach the public I am satisfied. It is merely given as a reason why an expensive shop cannot exist upon psychic books alone. Every time it sells a paper it is selling the advertisement of a trade rival. At the best, it has only three or four new books a month which are worth handling. How are overhead charges of fifteen hundred a year to be met from so narrow a basis?

Therefore, that basis must now be enlarged. The nobler experiment has been tried and has failed. One must cut the loss. And yet the Psychic Bookshop must carry on. How is this to be done?

It can only be done by turning half our fine premises, including one large window, into an ordinary bookshop which shall attract the general public. It means a considerable new expense, but it will, I hope, enable us to balance our exchequer. It certainly will do so if those who are interested in psychic matters, and who desire to see psychic books—spiritualistic, theosophical or occult—placed conspicuously before the public, will also patronise the general bookshop.

There was a Scotch colporteur once who set forth to sell the Bible. He found it hard work, and at last he cried in despair: "Oh, Lord, come down and sell your ain book, for I canna' do it." He probably widened out his activities as we shall do. But we must ask for your co-operation. There are some of our people who have been so splendid that they give us an open order for every psychic book worth reading to be sent on for their consideration. There are others—however, we need not go into that.

So far as new psychic books go, we would strongly recommend for propaganda purposes Judge Willmore's admirable shilling book, "The Testimony for Spiritualism." It is just what you need to send to the man whose mind is open but uninformed. Also we would recommend S. Cox's "Talks with the Immortals" (2s.), which has a peculiarly classical flavour. "Modern Psychic Mysteries," by Gwendoline Hack (Rider, 18s.), should be a very important work, but seems to be held up in the press. Hodson's "Science of Seership" (7s. 6d.), is the work of one who is himself a Seer. From India comes a little work by Mr. Rishi, whom many of us know, "Sub-hadra, or Life after Death." It is an excellent Oriental statement of our case. "The Man, Christ Jesus" (3s. 6d.), by Dr. Lamond, is a beautiful book. All friends of Mr. David Gow—and they are legion—would wish to have his "Four Miles from any Town" (Palmer, 3s. 6d.), a book of poetry, which really has the true poetic touch. My own "Our African Winter," descriptive of our many recent adventures, has been published by John Murray (7s. 6d.). There are many other books which I should wish to mention, but space is wanting.

I would, however, say a word as to my "Roman Catholic Church—A Rejoinder" (1s. 6d.), which we have ourselves published. Father Thurston has gone out of his way to make a bitter attack upon us, and it was impossible to refuse the challenge. I do not think that his Church will thank him when, or if, they read my reply. I wonder how long it will be before it is on the index. I believe that what I say of the Church there will wake a sympathetic echo in the minds of many who still remain within the fold and yet lend an ear to the wandering sheep who baas from outside. A time of Roman Catholic reforms is coming, and the sympathy given to Father Tyrrell's efforts in that direction shows that amid all the folly and bigotry there is really a liberal and reasonable minority in that ancient Church.

In future broadsheets we shall have a word to say on Contemporary literature. At present the best seller seems to be "All Quiet on the Western Front," a book which is disfigured by a great deal of needless coarseness. An example of how to treat the subject with realism, and yet with good taste, may be found in "A Subaltern's War" (7s. 6d.), by Capt. Edmonds. People are beginning to realise that the late war was the most interesting thing that ever happened in the world, and both on the stage, the screen, and in literature it is coming into its own. In this connection I might say a word for my own "British Campaigns in Europe, 1914—1918" (Geoffrey Bles), which contains a thousand pages, and forty-eight maps for 10s. 6d.—the very cheapest book, I think, ever offered. Among novels, I would recommend Miss Ertz's "Galaxy" (7s. 6d.), which is quite admirable. So, too, is W. B. Maxwell's "Himself and Mr. Raikes," which is worthy of one whom I put in the forefront of living novelists. Also Algernon Blackwood's "John Silence" (7s. 6d.), and Galsworthy's "Modern Comedy" (8s. 6d.). In Science, I would recommend Jean's "Universe Around Us" (12s. 6d.), and Prof. J. Arthur Thomson's "Modern Science" (6s.).

And now once more we commend ourselves to all good spirits in or out of the body.

ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE.

WINDLESHAM,

CROWBOROUGH.

*September, 1929.*

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