

Spirit-inspired poem wins first prize in contest

PN REPORTER

WHEN clairaudient Brian Hurst was presented with first prize in a poetry competition at an American State College he had to admit it was not quite all his own work. He had a little help from his friends — Lord Byron and Shelley.

The British medium, who now resides in Los Angeles, California, dropped in to PN during a short trip to this country to talk about the American psychic scene, and in particular how a poem received as automatic writing carried off an award at California State College.

The poem, entitled *Cinderella*, is still unfinished, but two parts have been received.

The first section came in India, in 1974, where Brian was working as a teacher. The second part was received eight years later, when he was a student at San Bernadino, California.

It all started during a dull afternoon in Ahmedabad, North India.

"I was feeling a little bored and somewhat nostalgic for England," said Brian.

"I had thought about writing some letters home when an unnatural chill seemed to surround me. I visibly shivered.

"From previous experiences as a medium, I recognised this as a signal of the presences of spirit intelligences.

"My arms were covered with gooseflesh; the hairs stood on end.

"I looked up, curious to see what might be visiting me. As my gaze wandered over to the yellow shuttered windows I began to see transparent faces floating in the air.

"To my surprise I thought I recognised the chubby face of the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and the dark curly hair and distinctive nose of Lord Byron.

"It was something so totally unexpected that I remember just drawing in my breath quite sharply and staring for some moments into the air. The images seemed to melt away as I tried to see them more clearly."

Brian experienced the sensation of being "overshadowed" and began to write.

Daily he was given around five stanzas to transcribe until he heard a voice clairaudiently

judges that as it was automatic writing he was only partly responsible. Still he was given the first prize.

"It must be the only time automatic writing has won a competition of this kind," said Brian.

The medium has now lived in America for the past four years and gives private group sittings at people's homes throughout California.

Among those for whom he has given sittings are an organisation called the Compassionate Friends whose members are all parents who have lost children in tragic circumstances.

"In many cases children have been murdered," said Brian.

"One boy, the only son of a retired police officer, had been killed in a car accident.

"The boy came through. I gave his name, Eddie. He told me to say that all his parents had left of him was a tooth.

"I told the parents and the father began to cry. He opened his hand and there was a milk tooth which they had saved in a matchbox."

I asked Brian if the particularly tragic nature of these sittings imposed greater pressure on him as a medium to produce results.

"It is certainly very tragic," he replied, "but I always say I cannot guarantee results. Although I don't have many blank sittings, every time is an experiment."

One feature of his work in America is that he often takes a map of the USA into a sitting.

"I find it helps an awful lot," he said. "It enables me to be very exact because the spirit communicators can tell me exactly where they have come from, and I can show this to sitters on the map."

Brian has a good deal of experience of physical seance-room phenomena. He sat with William Olsen, and direct voice medium Leslie Flint.

Were there any physical mediums at work in California?

"I went to an outstanding seance of direct voice mediumship with a medium called Annie Ziflow from Redlands, California," said Brian.

"For two hours in a totally dark room we heard voices in



DAVID AND HELEN ELIZALDE: Controversy still surrounds the tour made by these psychic surgeons. Here, Helen performs an operation assisted by David.

tions at close quarters. He defended their integrity when BBC's "Nationwide" made allegations of fraud by writing a strong letter to the corporation's Director General.

Last week he reiterated his belief in the Elizaldes' psychic surgery: "I defended them then, and I still do today. They were not fraudulent.

"The problem came when people who were not cured took out their anger and frustration in trying to discredit them.

"I actually saw the area of the abdomen wide open. I saw the intestines. There was no question of fraud.

"On top of this is the fact that I had a small cyst removed from my chest by David. He just pointed at it — and it completely disappeared."

But the most "astonishing" seance Brian attended was with physical medium William Olsen. He told me:

"I saw ectoplasm emanate from his mouth and nostrils and creep down his body on to the floor.

"Then it seemed to be transformed into a human hand. The fingers moved; the hand turned over. You could see all the lines of the hand.

"It was the most astonishing thing I have ever seen."