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# SCIENTIFIC VIEW

OF

# MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

A PAPER READ BY

MR. T. GRANT

*To the Maidstone and Mid Kent Natural History and Philosophical  
Society, at Maidstone,*

ON TUESDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 31<sup>ST</sup>, 1872.

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# A SCIENTIFIC VIEW

OF

## MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

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A PAPER READ BY MR. T. GRANT TO THE MAIDSTONE AND MID-KENT  
NATURAL HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY AT MAIDSTONE, ON  
TUESDAY EVENING, THE 31ST DECEMBER, 1872.

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THE limited time at my disposal will not permit of my entering into the evidences of Spiritualistic phenomena; I shall therefore content myself with stating, as concisely as possible, what those phenomena are, presenting such facts only as have been established by abundant evidence, and such as are generally recognised and admitted as facts by the most able and careful investigators. After attempting a scientific classification of the phenomena, putting them before you in as complete and systematic a form as I can, I shall proceed to offer a few short observations for the consideration of the Society which I have the honour to address.

Human beings, and, in some sense, all animate nature, consist of three principles: an outer visible body, an invisible spiritual body, and a directing intelligence, or spirit. The spiritual body is what is usually called the soul; it permeates the physical body throughout, yet is a distinct entity and is capable of temporary separation (more or less complete) from the outer body without causing death; it is completely and permanently separated at death, and thenceforward becomes the sole organ of the immortal spirit. This spiritual body is of various degrees of fineness in different persons. It will readily pass through ordinary matter, much as magnetism does, and although invisible to most persons, yet can be seen by a certain proportion of the human race. Perhaps one person in every thousand is born with this faculty of naturally seeing the disembodied souls of people, and the power can be artificially induced in a large percentage of human beings, as well

as in animals. It would even appear that inanimate objects have also a spiritual body, capable of being used by spirits, and also capable of being re-clothed with a material body after the original substance has mouldered away. Disembodied spirits have the power, under favourable conditions, of materialising their souls and spiritual clothing by a temporary magnetic use of atoms drawn partly from the bodies of persons in the flesh and partly from the air, by which means they can not only render visible and tangible portions, and sometimes the whole, of their forms, but also frequently speak in an audible voice, and move objects with considerable power. A systematic investigation into these evidences of a future state of existence, and of the power of spirits to manifest themselves intelligently to those they have left behind in the flesh, constitutes the science of Spiritualism.

Years before Spiritualism became an established term, much attention had been devoted, both by scientific and non-scientific men, throughout Europe and America, to a series of mental phenomena known under the names of Mesmerism, Clairvoyance, Electro-biology, Animal Magnetism, &c., which phenomena were apparently produced by the action of the active mind of one person upon the passive minds and bodies of others. I say *apparently*, because I think there is much reason to suppose that in many, if not all cases, the invisible spirits of departed persons take a part in producing the results. Before I had ever heard of Spiritualism, I had, through a long series of experiments carefully carried out in my own house, become practically conversant with nearly the whole range of phenomena so well and fully described by the late Dr. William Gregory, Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh, in his intensely interesting book entitled, "Letters to a Candid Inquirer on Animal Magnetism," to which I would refer all who feel interested in this investigation, as time will not permit me to do more on this occasion than to refer to those subjects, the agitation of which formed a suitable introduction to the grand opening of Spiritualism which was immediately to follow. Those who, like myself, had been engaged in experiments on persons in the mesmeric trance, were frequently startled by statements made by them whilst in that state, which proved them to be in communication with spiritual beings, who represented themselves as being departed relatives and friends, and who often gave tests of identity, and communicated facts with which they alone were acquainted. To account for these things every ingenious idea that the mind could devise was resorted to, rather than suppose for a moment that these intelligences were really what they represented themselves to be, namely, the disembodied spirits of departed persons. The fact, however, was destined to become established by a long series of positive evidences, such, I venture to say, as were never accumulated upon any other subject; and it may truly be said that our friends who have left us have absolutely forced upon us, in face of the most determined opposition, a multiplication of proofs of their continued existence impossible to be longer resisted.



Although nearly all the modern phases of spirit-manifestations have been more or less familiar to numerous individuals and families, in all countries, at all times, and are recorded in the literature of every age, with which also our own Bible as well as the sacred books of all religions abound, which records have been industriously collected and arranged in an interesting form by William Howitt in his "*History of the Supernatural*," yet, I believe, until the rise of Spiritualism, about twenty-four years ago, no systematic and scientific attempt has ever been made to investigate the matter, to inquire in a regular and orderly manner into the nature of spirit-action, or to establish modes of communication between this world and the next of an easy and workable character, and on a scale sufficiently extended to be generally available to all intelligent persons desirous of entering upon the subject. That this has now been done is far more due to the efforts of scientific spirits—such men as Benjamin Franklin, Lord Bacon, Swedenborg, and hundreds of others—than to any of our scientists in the body; although the late Professor Hare and Judge Edmonds in America, Dr. Ashburner, Professor De Morgan, and others in England, and many eminent men in other countries, have seconded the efforts of spirit-friends in a more or less energetic and praiseworthy manner, which is the more to their credit as in so doing they have exposed themselves to violent persecution, such as seems to be the lot of all reformers. The noble band of spirits who are engaged in this movement are cordially working together for certain ends, which are as yet but imperfectly understood upon earth; but there is reason to hope that their labours will eventuate in a complete regeneration of the world.

Early in the year 1848, hauntings occurred in the house of Mr. Fox, a most respectable man, connected with the Methodist Episcopal Church at Hydesville, Wayne County, New York, which were of a character to draw a large number of persons to the place, to witness the powerful movements of furniture, &c., and to hear the rappings and noises which were produced by some invisible power. It was soon discovered that there was evident intelligence in all these acts; and as raps were readily obtained at request, a code of signals was invented, and immediately adopted by the unseen actors, by means of which letters were indicated, and words spelt out, and complete conversations established, when it was found that the noises were produced by the spirit of a pedlar, who was murdered in the house about five years before, and who desired to expose the murderer.

When this success became known, as it quickly did through the press all over America, haunted houses were in request, and media were discovered in numerous localities. Thus many centres of communication were opened with the spirit-world, and the movement being directed or guided on the other side by spirits of great wisdom and energy, it extended rapidly, and many other modes of intercourse besides the telegraphic were established, which indeed have been continuously developing in progressive

order ever since, not only in America but throughout the civilised world, although our transatlantic cousins, having taken the lead, must also have the credit of having kept well in advance throughout. They quickly started several periodicals devoted to the subject, and in the course of a very few years numerous bulky volumes were published detailing the experiences of various circles and individuals. In the course of twenty years, notwithstanding the most violent and unscrupulous opposition from the press, the men of science and of religion, the regular intelligent communication with departed friends had become so thoroughly established as a family practice in America, that at a Convocation of the Roman Catholic archbishops and bishops held, early in 1867, at Baltimore, to consider how the matter should be met by the Church, it was found that the aggregate estimate by all the bishops of the number of Spiritualists in their several dioceses amounted to between ten and eleven millions, with 50,000 media, whilst Romanists and Protestants together only numbered eight to nine millions, with 45,000 preachers. It must be remembered these were statements made by the enemies of Spiritualism, and the result was to cause Spiritualism to be acknowledged by the Roman Catholic authorities in America, who, from that time, have not only ceased opposition, but have established media in their own institutions, and are endeavouring to induce their flocks to confine themselves to the media under their control.

It is remarkable that each class of manifestations, whether they take place in America, England, or elsewhere, seem to be generally conducted by the same individual spirits, or by some members of an appointed band. For instance, the spirit known as "John King," and his companion "Kate," with several others, have, from the commencement of the movement to the present time, attended nearly all circles, when required, to conduct physical manifestations of certain kinds, such as the Davenport Brothers' phenomena (which were exhibited in Maidstone several years ago), spirit-voices, levitation, and the like. I am aware, however, that some doubts have been expressed as to whether the spirits who have assumed these well-known names are always the same, and it will be obvious that identity is somewhat difficult to establish. It often happens that they break off suddenly, leaving for a few minutes, and, on returning, say they had been wanted in America, Paris, or elsewhere. In addition to these active and energetic subordinate spirits, who are engaged to perform certain classes of phenomena, and who appear to be selected as much for their honesty and integrity as for their expertness in executing the tasks allotted to them, there is also a spirit deputed to constantly attend and guard each medium; and if he or she faithfully attend to the guide's directions and influence, no harm would be likely to arise; but as media often rebel, and neglect their appointed guides, they lay themselves open to the influences of evil spirits, who appear to be always alive for mischief, as we find too much the case in the earth-life. It is not the medium alone who is thus

provided with a protector; but we have each and all of us, whilst on earth, a friendly spirit appointed over us to guard, guide, and protect us; and we are further assured that spirits themselves also are so attended, each having a spirit of a higher sphere than his own deputed to watch over him and lead him upwards, protecting him from bad influences, and encouraging the growth of all aspirations for good; although it is to be feared that too many, both in this life and the next, refuse to listen to the voices of their guardians, and thus bring endless trouble upon themselves and others.

In order to establish the necessary conditions to obtain spirit-manifestations, or, in other words, to form a human magnetic battery, a few persons of similar magnetic temperament sit together round a table, and endeavour, by prayer, singing, and other means, to promote harmony of feeling, whilst waiting passively for the presence of spirits to be indicated by rappings, movements of furniture, or other means. If one or more developed media are present, the object is greatly facilitated. This organisation, or battery, is called a spirit-circle; but any single person, sitting alone in a passive state of mind, with patience and an earnest desire for spirit-communion, would soon perceive indications of the presence and action of spirits in some way suitable to his individual nature. In my own case, my hand was soon moved to perform drawings, without any knowledge on my part of the character of the performance. This may be likened to a battery of a single cell.

There are many ingenious contrivances to aid spirits in communicating, and as tests to prove the independent nature of the influence, such as the planchette, a little machine on wheels for writing, which requires only the hand laid upon it; also, a similar instrument for pointing out letters on a card; crystals, to aid the psychologic medium, who sees passing scenes therein. Specimens of all these are exhibited on the table.

I will now endeavour to trace out and classify the phenomena evolved in the course of this gradual development of systematic intercourse with the spirit-world in as rapid and concise a manner as possible, which is nearly all that my limit of time will admit of.

Andrew Jackson Davis, the celebrated "Poughkeepsie Seer," who, although perfectly uneducated, has been, and still is, a medium through whom have been given from the spirit-world a great many most remarkable volumes of a scientific character, has been influenced to give, in his work called "*The Present Age and Inner Life*," a classification of the varieties of mediumship; and I present here a copy of his "*Table of Media*," which you will observe is divided into four successive groups, or strata, as he calls them, namely, Outward, Inward, Onward, and Upward, each stratum including six varieties of mediumship, making twenty-four classes in all.

## TABLE OF MEDIA.

| OUTWARD.   | INWARD.   |
|--|---|
| 1. Vibratory Medium.<br>2. Motive Medium.<br>3. Gesticulating Medium.<br>4. Tipping Medium.<br>5. Pantomimic Medium.<br>6. Impersonating Medium.         | 7. Pulsatory Medium.<br>8. Manipulating Medium.<br>9. Neurological Medium.<br>10. Sympathetic Medium.<br>11. Clairlative Medium.<br>12. Homo-motor Medium.  |
| OSWARD.  | UPWARD.   |
| 13. Symbolic Medium.<br>14. Psychologic Medium.<br>15. Psychometric Medium.<br>16. Pictorial Medium.<br>17. Duodynamic Medium.<br>18. Developing Medium. | 19. Therapeutic Medium.<br>20. Missionary Medium.<br>21. Telegraphic Medium.<br>22. Speaking Medium.<br>23. Clairvoyant Medium.<br>24. Impressional Medium. |

The *Outward* stratum includes all kinds of mediumship in which spirits act only on the physical organism, first using simply the electrical or magnetic emanations from the medium and others in the room to produce movements of objects, or concussions called rappings, and to control matter in various ways; and secondly, using portions or the whole of the medium's body, by direct action of spirits upon the bodily organs, the medium's spirit being more or less passive and not taking part in the performance.

When persons first come under the influence of spirit-power of the first or lowest kind, namely, the Outward, they often experience involuntary movements of the body, or parts of the body, of a most extraordinary character, and often quite alarming to those who are ignorant of the subject. Perhaps the medium is made to twist round with great rapidity like a top, and if he try to stop by throwing himself down, he is made to roll rapidly over the floor, until the influence, which comes in paroxysms, is expended. Sometimes the body is made to jerk all over in the most violent way. These, amongst many others, are forms of *Vibratory Mediumship*, the first you will observe on the list. I have often met with instances in my experience, and multitudes of persons are sometimes attacked together, with variations in accordance with individual character. The physical excitement and convulsive phenomena often witnessed at revival meetings are chiefly of this kind.

The *Motive Medium* comes next in order; he furnishes the magnetic power by which spirits are enabled to move tables and other material objects. With our present imperfect knowledge, or, I might almost say, absence of knowledge, of the nature of magnetism, it is not easy for us to understand how these movements of ponderous things are managed, although many attempts at a scientific explanation have been made by spirits, which I have not time to enter upon. This kind of mediumship is the most

common, and at the same time appeals most directly to the senses. When a circle is well organised and strong in number, objects weighing several hundredweights are moved about like feathers, and often without any visible human contact; chairs with their occupants are thus floated about, and sometimes up to the ceiling. The power is not derived from the medium alone, but is gathered more or less from all persons in the room, and it is a necessary condition that all present should be selected for a similarity in the character of the magnetism which they give out.

The third class is *Gesticulating Mediumship*, which appears to be a development of the vibratory. It is exhibited by the sect of "Shakers" of the present day in the initiatory stage of their development, and was a form of mediumship common amongst the prophets of the Cevennes, the votaries of St. Vitus, and in most religious excitements.

*Tipping Mediumship* follows next, and this again is a step in advance from the *Motive* mediumship, the movements of tables and other objects being so regulated by the intelligence of spirits as to produce telegraphic communications. A considerable amount of patience and harmony in a circle is requisite, after getting the simple movements, to obtain free and rapid communications, and the medium generally has to undergo a lengthened course of development.

*Pantomimic Media* belong to the fifth class; they are made, by the controlling or guardian spirit, to put themselves in various postures, so as to represent any peculiarity belonging to spirit-friends who are standing by wishing to make their presence known and to communicate. Lecturers on Electro-Biology produce, to some extent, the same effects.

The last in this stratum is the *Impersonating Mediumship*, which is a development from the Pantomimic. In this case the communicating spirit enters and takes full possession of the medium's body, whilst his own spirit stands aside. The spirit then, through the medium's organs, speaks and sees and acts as he used to do when in the flesh; and when this kind of mediumship is well developed, the very features of the face become changed, exhibiting the well-remembered peculiarities of the person whose spirit is communicating, so that he can indeed often be recognised before he begins to speak; when he does so, identification is then further established by his manner, gait, tone of voice, idiomatic expressions, and so forth, and his intellectual acquirements are distinctly brought out in a most wonderful manner, the medium's organs being often made to speak in languages known to the spirit but not to the medium, and bygone occurrences are referred to which have afterwards to be verified. Some of the most interesting manifestations that I have witnessed have been of this class.

Thus we have arrived at the end of the outward stratum. The forms of mediumship comprised in this group have been wonderfully developed of late years in this country, as well as in America and elsewhere. Through the magnetic emanations from the bodies

of media and sympathetic persons, certain well-known spirits seem to have acquired, by dint of constant practice, such perfect control over solid matter, that they can instantly, at will, not only destroy the power of cohesion of particles, but, as they say, by reversing the polarity, change it to a repulsive force, by which the particles are made to separate, and take up such form as the acting spirits desire. In this way, the substance of a door, or a portion of the wall of a room, when acted upon, will expand, and become so plastic that the substance can be made to stretch outward or inward in the shape of a tube, and any solid matter or person can be made to pass through without the least sense of resistance. Even metals can thus be expanded or contracted, so that a massive iron ring, just large enough to encircle the neck, has been instantaneously stretched sufficiently to pass over the head, contracting again to its original size when the magnetic current is withdrawn, or the ring can be put on the arm of any person while he grasps the hand of another. These experiments, with infinite variations, have been of such frequent occurrence in England for several years past, and have been so thoroughly investigated and tested by competent persons, that there is no room to doubt the perfectly real and genuine character of the phenomena. Media have been repeatedly taken from, or brought into, the midst of a circle, the doors and all outlets having been carefully secured, and various animals, birds, fruits, plants, and other objects have been fetched at request from long distances, almost instantaneously, and placed upon the table, passing through the walls or roof of the house as if no impediment existed. On one occasion when it was snowing in the street, one of the circle, sitting in a well-warmed room, asked the spirits to bring in some snow, when immediately it was found that snow was falling in flakes upon the table, and when, after a time, they were told to light the gas—for these experiments are best performed in a dark room—a depth of several inches of snow covered the table, having an even crystalline surface peculiar to snow newly fallen; and what is most remarkable is, that, although the table was perfectly covered to the very edge, none fell upon the carpet or beyond the table. When the snow was removed, large lumps of ice, weighing over half a pound each, were found under the snow. At another seance a bunch of keys was taken from a lady of the party and conveyed to her home, a distance of three or four miles, in space of time, so far as could be ascertained, of about a minute. The rapidity with which objects are carried long distances—often hundreds of miles—by spirits, is one remarkable point, suggesting the idea that time and space are almost annihilated. Most of you have no doubt heard of Mrs. Guppy's famous adventure, which has recently received so much notice from the press. Mrs. Guppy is a very powerful Outward medium, and in person very stout and heavy, yet at the request of one of a circle of inquirers assembled in London—a request made in a joke, without either expecting or desiring its accomplishment—this lady was actually fetched by the spirits, "Kate" and "John

King," from her residence, nearly three miles distant, and, passing through the roof and ceiling, was placed upon the table, without bonnet or shoes, within three minutes of the request being made. She had a pen with wet ink upon it in one hand, and an account-book in the other, in which the word "onions" was half written. A committee of gentlemen from the room started in a cab to Mrs. Guppy's house to investigate the matter, and found Miss Neyland, Mrs. Guppy's companion, in great wonderment as to what had become of her. She stated that at the precise time of the occurrence, Mrs. Guppy, having taken off her shoes, was warming her feet by the fire, and she (Miss Neyland) was reminding her of items of expenditure to enter in her account-book; she had just told her to put down "onions," and, on suddenly looking up, she was astonished to find Mrs. Guppy gone; she searched about, but of course could not find her. Instances of this kind are now frequently witnessed.

The magnetic emanations from a circle also enable spirits, after long and persevering practice, to materialise themselves and their clothing, so that they can stand before the circle with all the solidity and physical power which they possessed in earth-life, walking heavily about the room, moving objects, talking, laughing, and acting, with all the life and energy of former days. The material particles they profess to abstract from the media and others present, and partly from the air, by magnetic agency; and they are most careful, as their forms melt away, to restore those particles which they have made use of to the rightful owners, for which purpose they have been seen to pass round the circle, apparently throwing out something with their hands.

Portions of the clothing of spirits have frequently been cut off, and generally melt away; but when asked to do so, spirits will sometimes so thoroughly materialise their garments that a small piece cut off will permanently remain, some specimens of which I have here this evening. For many years in America and parts of Europe, and recently in England, spirits have succeeded in clothing themselves with matter sufficiently to affect a photographic plate, and thus most interesting photographic portraits of spirit-friends are being obtained in great numbers, of which a few well-authenticated and identified instances are here on the table. I believe copies of most of the English photographs can be obtained of Mr. F. A. Hudson, photographer, Palmer Terrace, Holloway Road, London, at one shilling each.

Spirits, through Outward media, can sometimes exercise perfect control over fire, to the extent of placing hot glowing coals from the grate in the hands of persons, or upon their heads, without burning or even singeing a hair. They can also produce lights of various magnitude and intensity, from a faint phosphoric appearance the size of a pea, to a brilliancy almost rivalling that of the sun, and as large as a man's head. Manifestations exhibited in a dark room are sometimes made visible by means of these spirit-lights.

The exceedingly varied and wonderful kinds of manifestations performed by spirits through media belonging to this Outward group, assisted by a circle battery, are too numerous to mention; but I must not omit to refer to direct spirit writing and drawing, especially as I have some interesting specimens here. The astonishing rapidity with which these elaborate drawings are performed, generally in a few seconds of time, whole sheets of paper being also covered with writing quite as instantaneously, is a remarkable characteristic of these productions, to obtain which a dark chamber is requisite, which may be conveniently formed by providing a large thick table-cover reaching to the floor, sheets of marked paper, with pencils, saucers of paint, &c., being passed under the table and withdrawn when the spirits give the signal. In this way the room may remain lighted.

I have necessarily occupied so much time with this first very important group of *Outward* classes of mediumship, that, in passing now to the *Inward* stratum, I am sensible that I must be as brief as possible. This group differs from the Outward, inasmuch as the spirits act more or less through the mind or spirit of the medium, and not upon the body only.

First we have *Pulsatory Mediumship*, in which the medium receives communications from spirits and answers to mental questions by means of pulsations, like tiny raps, on different parts of the body, or by sounds heard only by himself. These manifestations, although very convincing to the medium himself, afford but little satisfaction to anybody else.

*Manipulating Mediumship*, which follows, is, in fact, Curative Mesmerism, in which, however, the will of the mesmeriser is strengthened and guided by spirits. Dr. Newton, of America, who visited Maidstone in 1870 and made several interesting and permanent cures, is a most remarkable and successful medium of this class, many of his cures having, indeed, all the appearance of miracles.

In the next form of mediumship, the *Neurological*, the spirit impresses thoughts upon the brain, and the medium puts them into words; thus the communications partake of the peculiarities of the medium, and if the medium is impressed to write, he does so in his own handwriting and mode of diction and spelling.

Next comes *Sympathetic Mediumship*, which is an extension of the Neurologic, but in which the spirits enter more intimately into sympathy with the medium. Both of these last are transitional forms of mediumship, and not very reliable until carefully developed.

In *Clairlative Mediumship*, which succeeds in order, scenes of the past are clearly reproduced, or original scenes pictured to the mind, as in dreams and visions.

The last of this Inward group is called the *Homo-motor* medium, one who is in perfect sympathy and under the complete control of one individual spirit only, who, in fact, appears to live a second life on earth in union with him.



We will now enter upon the *Onward* stratum, which is a decided advance from the two former groups, and is generally reached after a long course of development through one or more of the lower states. Yet all the types of mediumship in this stratum are still transitional, or steps upwards to still higher conditions.

We begin with *Symbolic Mediumship*, in which the interior vision is opened by spiritual aid, and the medium sees in a vision the almost exact prefigurations of things which will occur at some future time, or which do in reality now exist, either in germ or in full or partial development.

In treating of this class of media I must refer at some length to the prophetic faculty which some appear to possess, instances of which are very common, many having been recorded of so remarkable a character as to lead one to suppose that all events are predetermined, and unfolded with as much regularity as the growth of a plant from a minute seed. I do not, however, pretend to assert that it is so, but I will give two or three instances, within my own knowledge, for your consideration.

When my friend Mrs. Spear returned to America, in 1800, she experienced in a dream or vision, about a week before sailing, all the sensations and circumstances of a fearful storm at sea: her own sufferings, and the sufferings of her fellow-passengers, were perfectly real to her; and she noted as minutely as possible as well the persons and peculiarities of her companions as the furniture and surroundings of the cabin and the particular actions of individuals. She was so terrified and affected by this vision, that she desired to put off her departure, but it was then too late to do so. When she arrived at her destination, she wrote me an account of her voyage, and stated that she encountered a storm which proved to be an exact repetition of her vision, even to the smallest particular; all her companions she had seen before, and each one enacted his or her part precisely as she had foreseen; and what is remarkable is, that, to her senses, the reality appeared the dream, and the dream the reality; for in the real storm she was like a looker-on in a theatrical scene, knowing beforehand what would happen, and what each person would do. The terror and suffering, therefore, which she endured in her dream, she did not experience in the actual event. This lady afterwards, in the same manner, went through a severe earthquake in California several days before it occurred.

A very estimable and intelligent relative of my wife's, now more than sixty years of age, had a vision when a girl, during a serious illness, in which she passed through all the most remarkable scenes of her future life, which, as they have occurred in succession, have appeared to her like experiences of the past, even to the fulfilment of little details. Thus, at a death-scene of a relative, the persons present and their individual acts accorded precisely with what she had witnessed in the vision more than forty years before; and when, nearly twenty years since, she visited my newly-built residence at Maidstone, and walked along the banks of the river, the

occurrence and the whole scene came back to her memory in the same way.

My father's brother saw and minutely described, several weeks before he died, what proved to be his own funeral, detailing the decorations and appointments, which were very remarkable and handsome, being all in white; he named the numerous persons present, and their order in the procession. The whole description was exactly correct, although, in ordering the funeral, the vision had been entirely forgotten, and no precise instructions were given to the undertaker, who exercised his own judgment in the matter.

The second in this group, *Psychologic Mediumship*, is a very important form. A medium of this class is one who is in a condition to be impressed by a sympathetic spirit with any set of ideas which he desires to represent. It is sometimes done in a pictorial form, when the medium clearly sees and describes scenes which appear to the vision, such as the appearance and movements of an army, a landscape, a congregation in a cathedral, and so forth. These scenes, which are minutely real and life-like, may or may not exist in fact. At other times a medium is perhaps made to plan out a system, in all its details, for the formation of a social community intended to regenerate the human race, which is probably the genuine production of the spirit of some enthusiast. A psychologic medium who has a talent for music may be made the instrument for giving to the world, perhaps, a new oratorio, composed by the communicating spirit or spirits, of which we have had a brilliant instance in this town; I allude to Mr. Tolhurst's oratorio "Ruth," in which case the sheets of music were sometimes presented to the sight and copied off by the medium, at other times his hand was moved to write, generally in the darkness of the night, for which purpose he always had sheets of unruled paper by his bedside, the lines being also done by the spirit-influence; in all cases the sheets came forth complete and perfect in every minute detail.

Drawing media belong to this class, and their productions are wonderful in their extent, beauty, and perfection, although the media themselves are in most cases ignorant of the art. I have some specimens here to-night.

There is no limit to the variety of ways in which a psychologic medium can be employed; and ideas can also be impressed upon his mind by embodied spirits, as we see done by popular lecturers on psychology or electro-biology.

We must now pass on to the next class of this group. The *Psychometric Medium* has the power of feeling and correctly describing the characteristics of persons with whose spheres he or she is brought into sympathy or contact. The power is generally exercised by placing to the forehead, the perceptive region of the brain, anything which has been intimately connected with the person, as a piece of his hair, his handwriting, or a well-worn article of dress. Some will thus read a sealed letter or the mottoes enclosed in nuts; and when this most interesting and wonderful

faculty is industriously cultivated, the whole past history and surrounding circumstances, not only of any person, but of any object whatever, can be seen, felt, and described with the greatest minuteness. Thus a closed volume can be read by simply placing the book, or a piece of paper torn from it, to the medium's forehead, and forthwith the whole contents of the volume is intuitively perceived by him as if he had actually composed it; or he can, at will, direct his attention to any part. There are well-known media in England who have thus in a short time devoured the chief contents of whole libraries. Thus again, a chip from a mastodon's tooth is sufficient to place the medium *en rapport* with the animal, enabling him to go through all the circumstances of the animal's life upon earth, just as we might call up past events to the memory; also to enter into the monster's feelings, and to see and examine all that the animal came in contact with during its lifetime, besides all that the particular portion of its body under examination has been associated with to the present time. Professor Denton, of America, has made these Psychometric investigations a particular study, and has published a most attractive and exciting work, recording some of his experiments, called "The Soul of Things; or, Psychometric Researches and Discoveries," which I strongly recommend for perusal. I had intended to read extracts from his account of the very early inhabitants of England, who were cotemporary with the animals whose fossil bones are found in the drift-beds, a view of their actual life and surroundings having been obtained through the mediumship of Mrs. Denton, on giving her a small fragment of fossil-bone for psychometric examination. Time, however, will not permit me to read it, but a copy of an English edition of the work, under the title of "Nature's Secrets," may be seen in the library of this Society.

I feel sorry to quit this very important subject with so short and incomplete a notice. Psychometry alone is worthy of being taken up as a life study; it has, I believe, already led to valuable results in directing mining operations and in various other ways; but I must now get on to the next class, namely, *Pictorial Mediumship*, which differs from the Symbolic chiefly in the circumstance that the things seen and described by the medium do not in reality exist as material facts, but are only representations, prefiguring or bodying-forth a spiritual or psychical truth. Ezekiel, Daniel, the writer of the Apocalypse, and Swedenborg are instances of Pictorial media, and there are many beautiful examples amongst modern media, of whom T. L. Harris is one of the most eminent; Judge Edmonds, of America, is another instance.

The next is the *Duodynamic Medium*, a word signifying two powers, he being capable of exhibiting two or more forms of mediumship at the same time. These compound media, maturely developed, are said to be comparatively rare.

The last in this Onward stratum is the *Developing Medium*, through whom spirits can very usefully assist in developing the mediumistic faculty in others. They have the power of harmonising

the influences which affect them, and of rendering media passive to the action of the spirits who are seeking the control of their organisms.

We now come to the last group, called the *Upward stratum*, which represents generally the highest development of which certain classes of media are capable.

First, the *Therapeutic Medium* is one who effects the cure of many diseases through the sympathetic power of seeing and describing minutely the disorganised parts of the body, and directing the necessary treatment; sometimes the manipulating mediumship is added, when the medium not only sees the source of mischief, but also makes curative mesmeric passes at the same time. I have had much and valuable experience of several media of this class.

Next, we have the *Missionary Medium*, who is irresistibly impelled to go, without knowing why or whither, wherever the spirit guides him. Under this controlling influence, media have been made to travel nearly all over the civilised world, generally without purse or scrip, or any personal knowledge of the places; the spirits raising up friends and helpers at every step as they are required. The medium has no concern for the supply of his bodily wants: if he is only faithful to the influence which guides him, everything needful is provided, without a thought on his part. Mr. John Murray Spear, who several times visited Maidstone, is a remarkable instance of this kind of mediumship, to which he has been devoted, I think, about twenty years. He was brought to England, carried from England to California, and thence to the Salt Lake City, &c., and has always been employed for beneficent purposes. I am acquainted with a medium of this class in Maidstone, who is too weak in body to walk far in his ordinary state, yet, under this influence, he is often made to walk long distances without feeling fatigue, at the most unreasonable hours of day or night, and he has several times been instantaneously transported from one place to another, miles apart.

The class which follows, namely, the *Telegraphic Medium*, is one who is informed by impression of things that are taking place, or have occurred, at a distance, such as the death of a distant friend. A medium of this kind can often be impressed at will by a friend in the body many miles away, with whom he is in sympathy, with any thoughts which it may be desired to communicate, and in this manner is capable, I think, of being employed in many useful ways. This has been experimentally accomplished in single instances with marked success.

The next class, *Speaking Mediumship*, when highly developed (as it is, for instance, in the case of Emma Hardinge), is a most useful and instructive faculty. Spirits can make use of her organism to pour forth, with every accompaniment of gesture, intonation, and impressive animation, the grandest flow of powerfully reasoned and ornate eloquence that I have ever witnessed or heard of; and yet her own mind the while is passive and unoccupied, or frivo-

lously amusing itself by noticing the furniture in the room, or perhaps the peculiarities of dress of its occupants; entirely unconscious of the tenor of the grand revelations she is the instrument of so gracefully bestowing upon her delighted audience. This lady is an instance of one who speaks without being entranced, her own mind being so pliant that it is able to hold possession of her body without obstructing the action of other spirits through her organism. In most cases speakers have to be entranced, that is, their spirits have to be removed from the body for a time, in order to give the acting spirit full control; but when this has to be done the medium is but little advanced from the personating mediumship, which is one of the successive stages which a fully-developed speaking medium generally passes through. Many of our most celebrated and effective preachers and speakers have been, or are, really speaking media, under the guidance of spirits, without its being suspected or understood even by themselves. This is, indeed, "inspiration."

The *Clairvoyant Medium* follows next in order, and is in advance of the telegraphic, because he is able to see the scenes that are actually transpiring at the time in another place, no matter how far distant. A form of clairvoyance, or what usually passes for such, is said to be sometimes accomplished by the spirits concerned in the events that are going on in each place, uniting their spheres together at an elevated angle in or above the atmosphere, in order to impress from thence upon the medium's spiritual vision the scenes as they transpire. Lucid and reliable clairvoyance is not common. In my mesmeric experiments I often met with very unreliable instances, but I had only one medium whom I always found truthful in the few instances in which I put her to the test; but as I was employing this person for curative purposes, as a therapeutic medium, her guardian spirit refused to allow her clairvoyant powers to be exercised, save upon exceptional occasions, and chiefly connected with the examination of patients at a distance. But a painful instance occurred of the exercise of this medium's clairvoyant faculty, which I must relate. She had a sister, wife of a sergeant, who, with her son and an infant, was with her husband at Cawnpore, at the time of the massacre. The clairvoyante was an involuntary witness of several scenes of the mutiny, including the terrible tragedy of Cawnpore, when she saw the fighting and capture of the prisoners and the massacre which followed. She distinctly saw her sister killed by a native soldier with a lance, whilst another pierced the infant and raised it upon his lance, also the subsequent disposal of the bodies in the well. She observed one of the camp-followers effect her escape unseen, and also noticed a spiteful attack of a native upon a disabled officer, breaking his leg with a heavy club. It is an interesting fact that the regiment to which this woman and the officer belonged came afterwards to Maidstone, and both were seen and recognised by the clairvoyante. She related the incident to the officer, who confirmed its correctness.

We now arrive at the close of this classification, the *Impressional Medium* being the last of the Upward group; he is generally one who has advanced through the neurologic, sympathetic, clairlative, and psychologic phases, and thus become so easily and thoroughly impressible by his guardian spirit that the medium appears to live a double life, the conditions and circumstances of both states of existence finding a ready expression through his organism at all times without his being entranced, the spiritual existence becoming, as much as the physical, his normal state. I think Andrew Jackson Davis may now be said to have advanced to this elevated state of mediumship, and a few others, through whom most interesting statements have been given relating to the nature of the after-life.

Davis guards media from supposing that they can, correctly or profitably, exercise more than one type of mediumship. Each should be content to become perfectly developed upon the particular stratum to which he constitutionally belongs. The age, he says, demands inspired men and women—media taught by the spirit of truth. Let everyone who can, become a teacher of the world, and strive for development and inspiration. He maintains that the true object of spiritual intercourse is the progressive spiritualisation of the nations. The manifestations are not intended to amuse the idle, nor to gratify the lovers of the marvelous, neither must they be regarded as an end, they simply point to the great and glorious destinies in store for mankind, socially, intellectually, spiritually, when we may become fitted, one and all, to have our interior faculties opened, and when it may truly be said, in its full sense, "Death is swallowed up in victory."

I can but think that every medium who is faithfully and honestly devoted to the enlightenment of mankind, has a very strong claim upon our gratitude, for, in most cases, the self-sacrifice is very great, and the trials, which many have to pass through in their development, are inconceivably painful, arising chiefly, I think, from the opposition to the Spiritual movement which antagonistic spirits are said to have organised, leading them to exert all their powers, at every step, to thwart the efforts which good and progressive spirits are making to enlighten and reform the human race. We see in the earth-life that every attempt to progress meets with violent opposition, every new truth or principle has to be fought for with intense energy ere it can be established, and we should indeed be startled did we know how much spiritual principalities and powers have to do, on both sides, in such contentions, for it is on the earth-sphere chiefly that spiritual battles are fought out. Nearly every person can be, and is, mediumistically influenced to some extent in some way, and if we were aware of the fact, we might be more wary of evil designs, and carefully question the moral character of the impulses and ideas which are instilled into our minds. In so far as we resolutely form for ourselves standards of truth and virtue, and resist all temptations to depart from those standards, we greatly help

to weaken the hold that ignorant and malicious spirits have upon the world, and even they are benefited, and sometimes reformed, thereby. These reformations of malevolent spirits have been often witnessed at circles, causing scenes extremely touching and impressive. Their malice generally arises from intense darkness and ignorance, and it has often been found that they can be turned from their course by argument, persuasion, and kindness.

Whenever a circle is formed for the manifestation of spirits friendly to the members of the circle, other spirits, opposed to the movement, are sure to present themselves, if they find the slightest affinity in the spiritual condition of any of the party, and through that point of affinity they strive to thwart the object of the guiding spirits, and to obstruct, and misdirect, and disappoint the sitters in every possible way. Hence the necessity of weeding out from the circle such members as possess discordant affinities, which can only be ascertained from the spirits themselves, and it often happens that the early communications are so involved, through ignorance of the influences at work, that the opposition spirits are listened to and get control of the circle, whom they often succeed in disgusting by the deceptive character of the communications, and perhaps lead the sitters to abandon their object altogether, thoroughly disappointed. This view of the matter will show the desirability, when attempting to form a circle, of obtaining the services of a developing medium, or of one or two well-tried media of other kinds, through whom the spirits, who have already established their control over them, can direct the circle in the selection of its members, and also expose the counteracting attempts of the opposition. With all possible precautions, the difficulties in the way of forming large circles are very great, and there are dangers attending the attempt to do so of too serious a character to be encountered by prudent persons. It is much better to confine a circle at first to two or three, until a good control is thoroughly established, after which, for the purpose of increasing the power or extending the influence, others may be admitted cautiously, one by one, being careful to keep open two or more distinct lines of communication, so that any operation of opposing spirits through new members may be immediately telegraphed by the guiding spirits to the chairman of the circle, through the media first developed.

Although the dangers attending experimental investigation into the subject of Spiritualism have been much investigated, it cannot, I think, be said that our knowledge of the subject is sufficient to permit us to cast away all doubts as to whether we are not bringing upon ourselves, or upon those in whom we develop the mediumistic faculty, influences that may, in some temporary or permanent way, do injury to the material or spiritual body. Doubtless, evil-disposed spirits are continually plunging their mediumistic victims into all sorts of troubles, including every species of crime, and I believe our gaols and lunatic asylums are filled with such, and the swaggering drunkards of our streets are,



for the most part, of this class. But the study of Spiritualism will show us how these poor creatures might be rescued from their unhappy state, a work which, in many instances, has been accomplished. Yet, for this end, a vast amount of experience, knowledge, and judgment is needed, and, to my mind, there is a responsibility attached to those who undertake to promote the development of media which no one should lightly take upon himself. He should at least satisfy himself that the moral status of himself and associates is such as to afford ample protection against the insidious workings of spiritual enemies.

In following out these inquiries, I recommend all persons to cultivate a serious and prayerful spirit; all sittings should be opened with prayer, and it will be found that singing spiritual songs will help very much to harmonise the minds of the circle.

The philosophy of real, genuine prayer to God I take to be, that we create in our minds thereby an affinity towards those spirits who are able to supply our wants. We form in our minds, and give expression to, a definite idea of something we earnestly desire, and, by so doing, we render our souls and bodies receptive to those influences which are able to bring about what we need. Many are the abortive efforts our dear friends in the spirit-world make to help us; often does the spirit-mother strive to influence an erring child, watching intensely for a receptive moment, some point of affinity which she can take hold of to inspire him with better purposes. If he would only think of her in prayer, how happy would she be, and what comfort and new life would she be enabled to pour into his soul! I have no doubt that answers to our prayers, though they be addressed to the universal Father, must naturally come through the kindly efforts of our spirit-friends, such as have an affinity for us in the direction of our prayers.

I suppose most, or all, persons here present have heard of Müller's gigantic Orphan Asylum, near Bristol, which has gradually expanded from the dimensions of a cottage to that of a group of four immense buildings, containing 2050 orphans. The money required for the building and establishment of these grand structures, and for the daily support of the orphans, has all been, or is, sent to Mr. Müller in direct answer to prayer, without any subscription-list or any solicitations whatever. He refuses to hold any fund or to accept any gifts for investment; he expends all he receives, and it is his delight to feel that he is daily and hourly dependent upon THE LORD, to whom he constantly appeals. Nothing can be more interesting in its way than the reading of his reports, a few of which I have provided on the table for distribution. Many of the answers to his prayers are so definite and precise, that they have all the character of modern spiritual manifestations; and it cannot, I think, be doubted that the philosophy of the whole affair is, that the prayers of himself and the orphans create such a strong and happy affinity between them and the parents and friends in the spirit-world, that they (the spirits) enter powerfully into the undertaking, and by a mediumistic influence



upon benevolently-disposed persons all over the world, who hear of the institution or read the reports, inspire them with the feeling to give bountifully, according to their ability, to so good an object. They also influence the management in many different ways through the mediumship of Mr. Müller and the orphans. When at Bristol, I had a long conversation with Mr. Müller, and found him a most earnest, simple-minded man, with *one idea*, that of absolute and direct dependence upon THE LORD. He has no other theory, and knows nothing of Spiritualism.

There have been two other instances, in France and Germany, of immense Orphan Asylums established in the same way, but neither could be sustained, on the same system, after the decease of the founders. Their successors had not the mediumistic power developed in sufficient force and purity; they had not fully the requisite *faith*.

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An important epoch in the progress of modern Spiritualism in England was the appointment of a committee to examine the subject by the London Dialectical Society, a Society of considerable weight and influence, and of which our representative, Sir John Lubbock, is a member. The Committee, consisting of thirty-three gentlemen, nearly all perfect sceptics, was appointed on the 26th of January, 1869. They divided their number into six sub-committees, several of which investigated the subject, with great industry, during about eighteen months, obtaining personal experience to a considerable extent; and on the 20th July, 1870, they presented a voluminous Report to the Council, with a request that it should be printed under the authority of the Society. As the Report was highly favourable to Spiritualism, perhaps it is not surprising that the Council, comprising members who had not inquired for themselves, and who, no doubt, partook of the general prejudice existing against the whole subject, most discredibly refused the request of the Committee, who therefore felt bound, in honour, to publish it on their own responsibility.

I cannot go into the contents of this goodly volume, but I am happy to tell you that a copy of it graces the shelves of our Society, and I strongly recommend it for your perusal. You will find at the end a large and useful list of works upon this and kindred subjects. This report has already had a great influence in favour of Spiritualism, and is chiefly important as being the first instance in this country of any scientific society venturing to touch such an unpopular subject. It is worthy of note, however, that in this instance it was done under a full conviction that the whole thing was an illusion, which they would be able to dispel, in a scientific way, once and for all.

It is time now to bring my paper to a close, but I cannot do so without feeling how very lightly and imperfectly I have been able to deal with this grand and extensive subject; so extensive, indeed, that one hundred lectures would not suffice to accomplish the full consideration of the mass of knowledge which has been acquired and recorded to the present time. Without entering upon speci-

fic details or proofs, I have assumed as facts only such phenomena as I consider to be fully established by ample evidence, which, for the most part, I have personally investigated. I have endeavoured, in a rapid manner, to present a scientific classification of the phenomena, capable of being applied and extended so as to embrace all the varieties of spirit-manifestations that have been, or may be, developed; and I have given a few hints to assist investigators in the formation of circles, warning them of difficulties and dangers. I will now conclude by referring to the nature of the spiritual state, and by pointing out some of the advantages that have been attained, and that we may further expect to derive, from a pursuit of the subject in an intelligent, honest, energetic, and persevering manner.

The all-important question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" has now been fully and experimentally settled, for we have constant proof that a man never really dies; he builds up his body as a house for himself in the course of his earth-life, which he decorates and lives in, and which affords him the means of intercourse with the world. It is furnished with telescopes to see through, delicate instruments for hearing, smelling, and speaking, capable of various degrees of usefulness, but all liable to get out of order; and after a few short years, if not sooner injured or destroyed, the building begins to decay, gets rickety and weather-beaten, and, at last, the man finds no longer the desired shelter and comfort, and he is obliged to abandon it, after which this earthly house crumbles to dust. But while he inhabited that material residence he perhaps used its various appliances as instruments wherewith to acquire knowledge; through the same means he fulfilled all the various duties of society—sharing with others the good things of earth-life, cultivating the respect and affection of his fellows—and he delivers up his house and its material belongings with a consciousness of having done his duty. Such a man, we now ascertain, upon quitting his body and its earthly possessions, retains, unimpaired, the knowledge, the mental acquirements, skilful accomplishments, and habits of thought and action, all of which continue, as before, to contribute to his pleasures and happiness; and thus we arrive at the principle that these things should be cultivated with a view quite as much to the next stage of existence as to this. When a young person is taken off, just upon the completion of a superior and expensive education, let it not be thought for a moment that all the labour and money bestowed upon him has been lost. No, indeed! if the event could have been foreseen, the cultivation of the mind should not on that account have been in any degree neglected. The sense of having developed talents, acquired knowledge, improved opportunities for good, and done one's duty in the state of life in which one has been placed, is, it appears, a source of everlasting happiness, whilst the neglect of these things causes endless regret and remorse. In our intercourse with the men and women of the past, we soon find that they are the same as when

they were present in all those mental acquirements, habits, virtues, vices, propensities, and peculiarities, which constituted their individuality when here—at least, they alter by slow degrees, and have even greater obstacles to encounter in effecting a change of character than they had on earth, because the body was then a help in varying their mental conditions. Persons who have lived grossly, and derived their chief enjoyment in the earth-life from the gratification of their bodily senses, seem to endure a large amount of suffering in the next state, and they are generally driven by their cravings to seek out media upon earth through whose bodies they can continue to gratify the horrid passions which have grown up in their nature. I truly believe that many of our drunkards, gamblers, and even murderers, are urged upon their reckless course by spirits in this way, merely to gratify in the persons of their victims the vicious propensities or spiteful feelings they have acquired.

If these statements can be proved to be true, as I believe they can, it is evident that a fuller knowledge of these and other conditions of the spirit-life must be of the greatest value, not only to guide and warn us in our conduct, but also to enable us to obtain protection from those unseen evil influences which we are all more or less subject to, and which darkness and ignorance are so calculated to promote. All religious systems depend upon certain views of our spiritual nature, and it must be of the utmost importance to us all individually, and to all whom we are in a position to influence, that we obtain, so far as we are able, correct views upon the subject. Truth cannot suffer thereby, and if we wilfully shut our eyes, we invite the blighting influence of dark spirits, who not only retard our intellectual and moral advancement in this life, but also in the life to come. In my opinion, most people are too much disposed to hold back from such inquiries, some even wish to ignore the facts altogether, often, apparently, through an idea that they are inimical to religion, not perceiving that true religion can live only in the light. There is an ample field for any number of students in the investigation of the nature of this human-magnetic force, by means of which our own spirits act upon our brains in the laborious operation of thinking and in every other act. The effect of this force upon the bodies of others has to be understood, and this takes in the whole subjects of Mesmerism and Electro-Biology. Then we want to know in what respects, and to what extent, the action of a disembodied spirit upon our organism differs from that of an embodied spirit? And, further, under what natural laws, and in what manner, disembodied spirits act upon inanimate matter, and how it is that emanations from our bodies contribute to those results? We also want to know whether embodied spirits cannot act upon inanimate matter in the same way, and if not, why not? Some might inquire in what respect the vision of those numerous persons who can see spirits differs from the normal state, and how that state of vision can be produced. The same with the hearing of spirit-voices, music, and other sounds, which some

can hear when others cannot; they might also inquire into the nature of spirit-impression upon the human brain, as in inspirational speaking, writing, &c.

Then others should gather up and compare the multitudinous statements from spirits of their experiences in the other life, and see in what respects they agree and differ, and we should endeavour to deduce therefrom some system by which we may be enabled to comprehend and appreciate the conditions of the future state.

There is yet another very important line for investigators to take up, namely, as to how far and in what manner spirit-influences are open to abuse, both by spirits embodied and disembodied, and how these abuses may be guarded against and prevented?

I believe all these questions, and many, many more, which are already engaging much attention, may and will be satisfactorily cleared up by the help of scientific spirits, who are always ready to respond to earnest inquiries.

Spiritualism, when well understood, cannot fail to produce a great change in our treatment of both lunatics and criminals, who are too often the helpless victims of vicious spirits; and if it can be demonstrated that an evil spirit is much less dangerous in the body than out of it, we shall cease to add to their powers for mischief by launching them into the other life before their natural time.

That the acquirement of a practical knowledge of the state of existence immediately following upon the earth-life is the best means of learning how to prepare for it, must be apparent to everybody. Let me therefore, in conclusion, invite you to enter warmly and industriously into this important and most interesting subject; but, by all means, to do so in a serious, orderly, and scientific manner, with a due consideration of the responsibilities you incur, and of the difficulties and dangers involved.

I have collected together on the table various specimens of spirit-drawings, borrowed from friends for the occasion, and also photographs of recognised spirits, and other interesting objects, which I invite you to inspect.

All publications relating to the subject, and every information, may be obtained of Mr. James Burns, at the Spiritual Institution, 15, Southampton Row, Holborn, W.C., who will also be pleased to afford facilities to those who may desire to attend seances and lectures in London.

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