

Laws of Mediumship Spiritism

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Spiritism
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AS IT IS now impossible for the well informed person to doubt the reality of a wide variety of psychic phenomena, there is an increasing demand for their rational explanation. I propose, therefore, to take up, one after another, the various types of such phenomena, and elucidate them according to the doctrines of Hermetic Science.

Before doing this, however, it may be well to mention a few of the numerous other ways in which mediumship plays a part in human life.

It has already been mentioned that the active always controls the passive, and that the grade of energy transmitted by anything depends upon its refinement. A water pipe transmits a flow of water because it has a structure suited to such transmission. A copper wire, on the other hand, because of difference in composition and form, will not transmit water, but is a medium for the ready transmission of electricity. A coarse-textured man, because his nervous system and brain are coarser in structure, transmits a grosser form of emotional and sensational energy, and consequently enjoys a form of recreation quite repugnant to the fine-skinned, fine-haired, more sensitive person. The finer the structure and the more highly organized it is, the finer the quality of energy that may pass through it.

In man we find the climax of physical evolution. In his brain and nervous system there is greater refinement and a higher organization than in any other mundane form. As a consequence, man is able to receive and transmit more subtle energies than lower forms of life.

Man a microcosm.½His physical body is the product of evolution, as the many vestigial structures present in it clearly prove. Embryology also points this out in no uncertain terms, for the human embryo, as do all embryos, briefly recapitulates the history of its ancestry. The life forms through which it has developed are shown in the forming child. In addition to such a physical history, man also contains within himself the history of his soul's evolution through lower life forms. The various traits of character, the impulses and desires, present in lower forms of life, are all present in man, as psychoanalysis plainly reveals. But for the most part they have been developed, transformed, and sublimated, into something higher and more beautiful. Nevertheless, in man are the vestiges, both of the structures and the tendencies, of innumerable other and lower forms of life.

It is further true, as a study of natal astrology demonstrates, that man has within himself in miniature all that is in the heavens above. The zodiacal signs and the planets, as well as other celestial bodies, have their correspondences within his constitution. When they move they produce discernible changes in man. When they form definite relations to each other,

called aspects, man feels differently than he did when such aspects were not formed, and unless he understands the source of his impulses, he may act in response to these feelings.

Because man has within himself something corresponding to all that is below him in the scale of evolution, and correspondences to all in the sky above, and also, it is to be inferred, to all forms of intelligences above him in the evolutionary scale, the ancient Hermetics called man a microcosm. This means that man may be considered a universe in miniature.

Man a transformer of energy.½As a microcosm, or little universe, man is able to receive and transmit a very wide variety of energies. In addition to the energy derived from the food he eats and the air he breathes, he is also the medium for countless other forces.

His astral body constantly receives and transmits the energy radiated by the planets. Even as the sun acts as a transformer for the high-frequency energies of space, so man in his turn acts as a transformer of planetary energies. He is also a transmitter of intellectual and spiritual energies that reach him as wave motions from regions of greater intelligence and spirituality. The grade of intellectual and spiritual force he transmits depends upon his mental development and soul unfoldment.

The astral energies radiated by the planets are intercepted by his astral body, being received more freely at those points in his astral structure, as indicated by planets in his birth-chart, that were organized by states of consciousness previous to his birth. These astral energies are even more essential to the welfare of the astral body than is sunlight to the welfare of the physical body. Only a portion of such energies received, however, is utilized by the person. The balance undergoes transformation, or change in frequency of vibration, and is again radiated, much as the sun and planets receive energy of a more general character and giving it a special trend radiate it again.

Likewise, such spiritual and intellectual energy as man receives or generates is again in large measure radiated. As seen by clairvoyant vision this radiation is of two distinct and separate qualities. The more gross astral energies and thought vibrations flow forth to remain in contact with the earth, and may be received in measure by lower life forms. In other words, the thoughts and feelings of man, as well as certain other astral energies, flow about and permeate the earth, so that other life forms coming in contact with them may receive and appropriate such of them as their organization will permit. In the upward struggle of the seven sub-mundane degrees of life, this force radiated by man and penetrating to the very center of the earth, is of great assistance. It affords these degrees of life from mineral to man whatever of intellectual energies they are capable of absorbing and utilizing. It thus hastens their evolution through providing them with mental nutriment and the incentive to effort.

The other and more spiritual portion of the force radiated by man travels away from the earth and the astral plane immediately surrounding it. There are seven super-mundane realms of life; realms of life whose denizens have never been, and never will be, incarnated on earth. They form a gradation in spirituality of seven steps between man and the angel. Being too spiritual and lacking in penetrative and initiative force for incarnation in gross matter, they depend upon man for all knowledge of material conditions. The higher essences of man's intellectual and spiritual endeavors may be assimilated by them and give them information that is a requisite of their progress.

But now I must return to earth, and to matters that are susceptible of proof by the average man.

Action of mind at a distance.½A very common phenomenon, and one that should be

understood by everyone so that all may avoid becoming the dupes of unscrupulous practical psychologists, is the exercise of thought power to influence another person's thoughts and actions without the intervention of the spoken word or any sign.

It is possible, for instance, in a public gathering, to concentrate the mind on some person and make, him turn and look at one. If the person is known to the experimenter it will be much easier thus to influence him, for a point of contact will previously have been established. But it is possible thus to influence a total stranger. Such experiments, which have been rigidly tested out and after coincidence has been eliminated found actually to produce the desired effect, are very simple, but they demonstrate in a very forcible and convenient way that the mind of one person can, and sometimes does, influence another person at a distance.

Further, it is not uncommon for a hypnotist to direct the actions of his subject by mental command alone. There is plenty of irrefutable evidence that this has been successfully done.¹ The various kinds of absent treatments applied by metaphysicians, mental scientists, Christian scientists, and new thought practitioners, are practical applications of this power of one person to influence another at a distance.

The thought of one individual sets up lines of force in astral substance which reach the second individual, and if the experiment is successful, sets up vibrations similar to the thought held, in the astral brain or astral body of the other individual. If the person to whom the thought is sent is one who is in the habit of controlling his own thoughts and actions his astral brain will repel, and will not accept the thought sent to it, unless it is a thought quite acceptable and perceived to be for his welfare. But if the person has cultivated irresponsible mediumship, or is naturally negative, the thought will enter the astral brain and may quite dominate it. The thoughts and actions then will be those willed by the person sending the thought.

No person who habitually controls his own thoughts and actions need be dominated by any other person or entity.² The soul that has built the body about itself, under normal circumstances quite able to resist foreign invasion from any source. It is aware that to turn around and look at someone who is concentrating on it in a public meeting is not apt to prove detrimental, but it will resist detrimental mental commands even as it would resist them if they were uttered aloud.

Power of thought to change bodily form.½ Once a thought image has been accepted, however, particularly if the image be strong and vivid, momentous results may follow. The physical body is shaped and moulded by the astral body. Normally this moulding is quite gradual, but when the image in the astral brain is supported by an unusual amount of energy it brings about such a radical and abrupt change in the astral form that the physical also is drastically transformed. In proof of this, it would be an easy matter to cite numerous instances in which persons have been instantly healed by mental or spiritual treatment, such healing being accompanied by marked changes in the body and its functions. Almost everyone nowadays knows of one or more such cases.

Stigmata.½ But this power of the mind, acting through imagination upon the astral body, to make radical changes in the physical, is even more dramatically exemplified in numerous cases of stigmata. Stigmata is the receiving upon the body, through religious devotion, wounds similar to those of which the Nazarene died on the cross. Holes are formed in the palms of the hands and on the soles of the feet, and the side opens as if it had been pierced by a spear. Blood actually flows from these holes, and also often from wounds on the forehead where the Nazarene wore His crown of thorns, being caused solely through the action of the mind.

Saint Francis of Assisi received such stigmata. Yet as he lived so long ago, materialists put the whole matter down as a legend. But cases of stigmata also occur at the present day, and have been thoroughly investigated by competent scientists. The verdict is that stigmata do actually occur, and that they emit blood.³

Speaking in strange tongues.½ Before leaving the subject of the power of one mind to influence another at a distance, it is well worth recording that a command given in a language that the person influenced does not understand has almost as much force as if given in his own language. His astral brain, having much keener perceptions than his objective mind, recognizes the thought behind the words, and tends to be influenced by this thought.⁴

From this ability of the astral brain to recognize the import of words of a strange language, to speaking in strange tongues, is but a step. There is no doubt now of the ability of many persons when more or less under the control of a hypnotist or astral entity, to talk intelligently in a language with which they are normally unfamiliar. Such ability is reported to have been common among the saints and early Christian fathers. By certain religious sects at the present day, talking in strange tongues and the ability to heal by laying on of the hands is required of those who claim to have received grace in full measure. To be sure, in many instances this strange speech is unintelligible, but at other times it is really recognizable talk.

In these cases, as in the cases of the saints of old who often had aureoles about their heads, appeared simultaneously in more than one locality, possessed an "odour of sanctity," had the faculty of prophecy, suffered levitation, and were insensible to fire; it is difficult to determine just how much of the phenomena is produced by the activity of their own astral brains and how much is due to the control exercised over them by discarnate entities. In cases of speaking in tongues at religious conversions, I believe, from my own observations, that a high percentage in their emotional frenzy become dominated and controlled by astral entities of some kind.

The ouija board.½ One of the most familiar approaches to psychic phenomena is by way of the ouija board or planchette. Particularly since the war, during which so many gallant sons and fathers laid down their lives, has the ouija board come into vogue. Little wonder, when the craving is so strong to again converse with loved ones from whom violently parted.

The ouija board and planchette consist of either a flat board or a dial upon which are printed letters, numbers, and perhaps a few useful words. There is a movable pointer so arranged that it may easily be moved over the board in such a manner as to point to the characters on the board or dial. This pointer is of such size that one or several persons may rest their finger tips gently upon it.

In operating the ouija board½ and the planchette works practically the same½ the most approved method is to place the board upon the laps of two persons, preferably a lady and a gentleman. The fingers of both are placed lightly but firmly upon the small table which acts as a pointer, this table being on the board and permitted to move freely over it. In a few minutes this small table commences to move; at first slowly, and then with more speed. Thus it is able to talk by touching the letters and characters printed on the board, and if questions are asked it will answer them.

In using the ouija board and similar appliances, the more negative and passive the experimenters, as a rule, the more satisfactory the results. The questions may be asked either orally or mentally and are answered with equal success.

Now, most of the motions made by man are not the result of premeditated thought, but are directed by the astral brain. To be sure, we think of walking and then walk. But walking is a very elaborate and intricate process of balancing the action of one muscle against another. That is, the nervous system has been educated to respond with the utmost alacrity to commands issued by the astral brain.

Because of the facility with which the astral brain can cause unconscious muscular actions, it is easier, in the normal run of things, for the astral brain to communicate intelligent thoughts through directing appropriate muscular actions than for it to impress the thoughts directly upon the physical brain. Hence it is that the use of unconscious muscular activity is the easiest method possible, under ordinary circumstances, for communicating that which is in the astral brain to the cognition of the physical brain. It is due to this that more people can get psychic messages through the ouija board and such devices than through any other method.

Range of information of astral brain.½As has been pointed out in the last lesson, the field of information accessible to the astral brain is enormously greater than that open to the physical consciousness. All that the person has ever experienced or known is stored up in the astral brain. The range of the astral perceptions is infinitely greater than those of the physical senses. It may tune in on almost any imaginable source of information, not only on the record preserved in the astral world of all that man has known and thought, but it may also come mentally in touch with still higher centers of information. Therefore, the questions that the astral brain of a person using the ouija board may answer intelligently are exceedingly wide in scope. And undoubtedly it is commonly the case that a portion of the information given through the ouija board emanates from the experimenter's astral brain.

While such a range of perception and such a * storehouse of knowledge may be used by the astral brain, it is probable, because the astral brain requires much training to utilize a very extensive range, that in many cases a large part of the information received through the ouija board comes from some discarnate entity. This is all the more certain because the astral world about and interpenetrating the earth is so crowded with astral entities who seem to have no objection whatever to taking control of a negative person and manifesting through him whatever of intelligence, or lack of it, they possess.

Another factor influencing the veracity of psychic communications of all kinds is the susceptibility of the astral brain to suggestion. It has been educated to obey the desires of the objective mind. Therefore, if there is a strong desire for a certain type of manifestation, and no controlling entity is present, it quite naturally endeavors of itself to produce the phenomena. If there is a strong desire present on the part of the experimenter to receive a message of a certain kind, or on the part of other persons present, which it is able to perceive, it will try to deliver such a message as is wanted. The message but reflects the desire of someone present, and may be widely at variance with the truth. And even though some other entity is in control and trying to give a truthful and important message, the astral brain, under the influence of the desires of those present, may still have power enough to warp the message out of all semblance to its original self. Truthful, serious messages may be expected only when those present are serious, and above all else, desire the truth, however discomfoting it may be.

Factors influencing veracity of spirit messages.½We now perceive that in all spirit messages there are three factors which may be present in widely varying proportions, and which may have an influence upon the message. There is the astral brain of the medium, which may be entirely responsible for the message, or which may have almost nothing whatever to do with it. There is the desire and combined thought force of those present

acting upon the astral brain of the medium. This may amount to almost nothing in some instances, and in others may be the deciding element. Then there is the presence of one or more astral entities, which may be intelligent or may be ignorant, which may be impersonations and hoaxes, or may be as they represent themselves to be. They may have but partial control of the medium and not be responsible for the message, or they may be in complete control and the sole authors of it. The self-controlled clairvoyant can see these entities and can feel whether or not they are genuine or are wearing a mask of deception, but the irresponsible medium has no way of knowing whether or not his controls are as represented.

Proof of Human Survival. Undoubtedly those who have once lived on the earth and passed to the next realm sometimes communicate with those yet in the flesh through such simple devices as the ouija board. Ouija board answers usually are trivial and shallow, or but shadow the thoughts of those present. Yet occasionally information is thus received of astounding correctness and great value. Instances are recorded in which such messages have saved lives, and other instances in which information was received known to no living person. People who have disappeared leaving no trace, drowned without witnesses, have been able to communicate the method of their death and direct searchers to the physical remains.

There are other cases recorded where people have been directed to dig for mineral deposits where there were no surface indications; consequently the location could have been known to no living person, and the mineral deposits so located have proved of great value. These are exceptional cases, it is true, and many a poor dupe has been sent to dig for mineral where there was none. Yet these successful cases can not be accounted for by the theory that the knowledge was transmitted from the mind of some living person. Undoubtedly, as I said, under certain circumstances those physically dead communicate again with the living.

The range of power of the astral brain of living man is so extensive that it taxes human ingenuity to the utmost to devise any test by which human survival may be proved. One of the tests, recently devised, called cross-correspondences, is meeting with considerable success. The discarnate personality, through several widely separated mediums, gives fragments of classical quotations, or other matters with which he was familiar when on earth, and of which the mediums are quite ignorant. These fragmentary messages, having no meaning separately, are directed to be sent to the Psychical Research Society, where they are pieced together, and not only make sense, but reveal something that research shows the person giving the message was familiar with, and would naturally use to establish his identity. These experiments are yet in their infancy, yet even so far as they have been carried, they seem to me to establish the survival of the human personality beyond a reasonable doubt.

In these communications which we have been considering, the medium is more or less under control. I shall not violently condemn the use of the ouija board. It does imply, however, loss of control of the "body and mind in small degree. In just so far as there is success with the ouija board, precisely so much has disintegrative and irresponsible mediumship been established. Some force other than the normal personality has usurped the power temporarily to use a portion of the astral brain, nervous system, and muscles. It is so much lost in the struggle to command the body and progress in evolution. Yet a few rain drops do not make a river, nor do a few drinks make a drunkard. Many people believe that strong liquor in moderation is more beneficial than the reverse. They admit that excess is ruinous, but contend that the pleasure to be derived from drinking within limits is greater than the harm done the body by the alcohol.

Such persons could with equal logic extend their" argument to the use of the ouija board. At

least it seems to be the least harmful of negative mediumistic endeavors. As a rule the amount of control is small. And while I know of a few persons who have gone to excess with the ouija board and landed in the psychopathic ward, as also I know certain drunkards who once believed they could "drink or leave it alone," yet I also know hundreds of people who have experimented with the ouija board, and even with automatic writing, which requires a stronger extraneous control, who, from all appearances, are none the worse for it.

Wise spiritual intelligences use impression.½ Of this, however, I am quite positive; truly wise spiritual intelligences do not make a practice of communicating through a person under control. In dire necessity, on some rare occasion, they may do so, but only because no other avenue is available and the message must be given.

Wise spiritual intelligences, when they are permitted to do so, give their messages by impression. Aware of the disintegrative effect upon the medium of controlling him, they refuse to exercise such control. They merely talk forcefully to the astral counterpart of the person they wish to impress. The astral body is not controlled, but has full knowledge of what is being said and who is saying it. It is a matter of conversation, not always one sided, even as two people ordinarily talk on meeting. This communication, which is given by an astral person;½a disembodied person;½to the astral counterpart of a person still in the flesh, rises from the astral brain into the region of objective consciousness. It may seem, if the person is not accustomed to receiving such impressions, but a vague realization that a certain thing is a fact. If the person receiving the message is a little more advanced in psychic matters, it may rise into objective consciousness as a series of complete and precise sentences, but with no very clear knowledge of the source from which derived. But if the receiver has practiced to develop the ability, he may be as fully aware of who is talking and what is being said as if he were talking to a friend in the flesh.

A great deal of information, and I am sorry to say misinformation also, is given by those of the inner planes to those on the outer plane who delve into occult matters, without the recipient being aware of the source from which his impressions come. He merely feels that something is true, or all at once some information flashes into his mind. I speak of misinformation advisedly, for those who pass to the next plane of life do not immediately become all wise. Until educated away from them, which may be a very long time for one who on earth was very set in his ideas, they still hold to the same beliefs and habits of thought that they held on earth. They may be quite as much in error, and quite as dogmatic about it, as anyone in the world. Only those who keep an open mind and endeavor to learn the unprejudiced truth make rapid progress on the inner planes toward a better understanding of truth than those on earth. And these, invariably, when they find a seeker who is worthy, endeavor to impress him with a knowledge of truth as they have found it. Hence the oft repeated slogan in occult circles that whenever the neophyte is ready, behold, the master appears. But a master teaches, admonishes, and advises his chosen pupil, the same as he would do if he were a spirit in the flesh. No true master places his neophyte, or anyone else, under control.

It is always a joy to the scholarly men of earth to find someone with a desire to emulate them in the acquirement of knowledge. As I know from observation and experience, those who master difficult branches of learning are ever eager to help the younger student who aspires to acquaint himself in the same branch. And when they find a pupil who shows considerable ability they go to great pains to help him over the difficult parts of the road.

This is quite as true of wise spiritual intelligences. They are always eager to find a pupil who is worthy of instruction. Yet they are not desirous of shouldering all his responsibilities in life, or of advising him on every trivial matter. Each soul should cultivate his individuality and learn to decide his own issues whenever possible. But wise spiritual beings

are ever ready to advise us if we indicate by our efforts and aspirations that we are striving to help ourselves. This they do through impression.

Automatic writing. Next to the ouija board in popularity is automatic writing. The medium sits at a table with a sheet of paper before him. He grasps a pencil in his hand and places his hand in the position of one writing. He then becomes passive and awaits results. When the controlling entity has succeeded in establishing rapport with the sitter which really consists of organizing such lines of force between its astral form and the astral form of the sitter that it can communicate its own motions to the form of the subject the hand begins to write through no volitional effort of the medium, and usually the medium is ignorant of what is being written.

Rapport. Before going further I should explain more about rapport. Both those in the flesh and those out of the flesh can raise and lower their vibrations temporarily to a certain extent, much as the strings of a musical instrument can be changed in tension. To communicate rates of motion from one entity to another requires only that some of the vibrations of their astral bodies have similar frequencies. This forms a point of contact through which the more active can inject its rates of motion if the frequencies are made synchronous that is, vibrate in unison, the crest of a wave motion in one corresponding in point of time to the crest of a wave motion in the other. Synchronism is easy when one of the entities becomes passive.

The active entity, once a point of contact is established, injects more and more of its rates of motion into the astral body of the medium. The vibrations of the medium are thus raised or lowered until they very largely vibrate in unison to those of the controlling entity. The entity then has complete control and the medium is powerless.

Rapport is established when the vibrations of one entity vibrate in unison with those of another entity. Rapport does not imply control, for two persons may be in rapport and neither exercise control of the other. Rapport merely facilitates the exchange of energy, and may be the result of similar rates of energy present due to similar thoughts and similar planetary influences at birth, or it may be produced artificially by raising or lowering the vibrations. Rapport is very important and valuable, but in the case of negative mediumship it is a principle used by the controlling entity for obtaining control of the medium. Once control is gained, the more thorough the rapport the fuller the control.

The astral world is so crowded with entities of different grades and kinds that a call sent out by a medium for a control is quite sure to be answered by something. It may even be answered by the deceased personality who is supposed to be in control. But however the message may be communicated through an irresponsible medium; whether by the ouija board, automatic writing, table tipping, the control of the medium's vocal organs, or in some other fashion; in addition to the probability of some entity exercising control of the medium's body, there is also a possibility that the message emanates from, or at least is colored by, the astral brain of the medium or the thoughts, conscious and subconscious, of those present.

In automatic writing the controlling entity, after establishing rapport with the medium, is able to direct the arm and hand in writing whatever it may desire.

Table-tipping. In table-tipping⁵, unconscious muscular contractions, such as are used in ouija board communications and automatic writing, are made use of to start with, but there soon develops an additional factor. Those present sit in a circle about a small table, placing their finger tips lightly upon it. Soon the table begins to vibrate distinctly, and when this vibration reaches a certain tension the table begins to move about in a more or less

intelligent manner.

It is truly wonderful what power of expression can manifest through a small wooden table. It often moves toward one of the sitters and actually caresses him, or it may manifest enmity through violent gyrations. Someone present asks the table if the control is a certain person long dead, and when the right name is mentioned the table pounds violently on the floor. It answers questions by pounding on the floor or rocking violently to express an affirmative, and slows almost to a stop to express a negative reply. It also communicates by a prearranged code, tapping on the floor, or moving in a certain manner to make itself understood.

The additional factor, of which I made mention, is the etheric emanations of those present, which are used by the control to set the table vibrating and to assist in its movements. The control, through its rapport, or close association with the astral form of the medium, is able to communicate motions set up by it in astral substance to these ethereal forces drawn from the sitters. This ethereal force may then be directed through the table and its motions imparted to the physical substance of the table.

The use of etheric energy drawn from organic substance, and in the case of table-tipping drawn from the medium and others present, seems to be an absolute requisite for the exerting of physical force* by a discarnate entity. Another rule, while perhaps not absolute, yet at least of common observance, is that the more physical force exerted by a discarnate entity the less intelligence it manifests. Clairvoyants and seers of all ages claim that strong physical manifestations of psychic force are nearly always produced by entities low in intelligence, chiefly elementals, but who possess much strength in the lower astral currents. It is truly surprising how many mediums who do healing or produce physical phenomena claim American Indians as controls. They hold that the Indians are closer to the earth and consequently have more power to give strong physical manifestations.

In table-tipping the particles of the table become so charged with energy as to give the impression of being alive. Anyone who has had experience with genuine table-tipping could not be deceived as to whether or not there is a strong psychic influence present, for there is a peculiar vibration in the wood that may be distinctly felt before, and as, the table begins to move. Not infrequently, also, the table is levitated completely from the floor, or continues to rock, while no fingers are closer than several inches above it, and on occasions it moves entirely across the room with no one touching it.

Levitation.⁶ This brings us to the subject of levitation.⁶ The movement of light objects, and also the movement of heavy objects, at a distance from the medium, sometimes at a great distance, and without physical contact of any kind, has been thoroughly established by men of international scientific reputation. Chairs, tables, and many other objects, including sometimes the medium, are lifted into the air and suspended there without visible means of support.

The late Mr. W. J. Crawford, D.Sc., lecturer in engineering at the Municipal Technical Institute, Belfast, by a great number of experiments, established, through placing the medium on a weighing machine, that it is customary for the medium to gain in weight as much as the object lifted; also, that when an object is made heavier than normal, the medium, though at a distance, loses in weight the amount gained by the object. This leads to the conclusion that there is an invisible astral and etheric connection between the medium and the object acted upon. The controlling entity extends the medium's astral body, and this becomes the moulding power by which etheric emanations present are used as energy to lift the distant object or to hold it down. It is as if an invisible and extremely elastic arm reached out from the medium to act upon the physical object.

Other experiments indicate that it is quite common where objects are lifted or moved by invisible forces, for each of the persons present, some more and some less, to contribute to the moving force. Each person in the circle may gain something in weight when a heavy object like an oak table or a piano is lifted from the floor by an invisible force. The controlling entity is able not only to use the etheric emanations of the medium, but also to use extensions from the astral bodies and the etheric energies of every person present, in more or less degree, in the lifting of material objects. If a sudden shock disturbs the medium, the object will drop to the floor, because the communicating lines of force between the medium and the object have been broken.

It would be stating more than has been proved, and more than is probable, to say that objects are only levitated by pressure exerted by an extension of the medium's astral and etheric bodies. In certain cases of hauntings, which will be discussed in the next lesson, objects apparently move when there is no human medium near, and irrespective of whether or not there are witnesses. It is not uncommon for pictures to be violently thrown from the wall, clocks to stop, raps, knocks, and other physical manifestations to take place at the moment of death of a relative in a distant land.⁷ The dying person may act through the astral body and etheric emanations of some person in the house where the manifestations take place, may use the etheric emanations drawn from his own body, or in rarer instances there may be etheric energy associated with the physical substance of the environment that is available. It seems that it is not always essential for the production of* physical phenomena to have a human being to draw upon, but such human is at least present in by far the majority of cases. Certainly, in all cases, there is present an available supply of etheric energy that has been associated with organic life.

If we bear in mind the way in which an extension of a medium's astral body is able to act as a lever to lift objects at a distance, we at once see how an extension of the medium's astral body, which is able to assume any desired form, may hold the medium to the floor. In this way, certain mediums are able to increase their weight at will, although of course, being in a trance state, they know nothing about how the effect is produced.

Spirit rappings.^{1/2}We also now are able to perceive how spirit raps⁸ and knocks are produced. These noises in the home of the Fox sisters were the commencement of modern spiritualism. They may occur on a table, on the walls, on the ceiling, or apparently even from the air overhead. When the raps seem to come from a wall or solid object, the wall or object vibrates as if it had received a blow. An invisible projection from the medium sufficiently strong to lift a chair or table, it seems to me, should experience little difficulty in striking a blow that can be heard, or in producing condensation and sudden expansion of the air in limited areas to produce an explosive effect. But in all these cases the noises are, as I believe, produced through etheric motions organized by astral lines of force from the medium, to such a consistency as to be able to communicate motion to physical substance.

Slate writing.^{1/2}Slate writing and direct writing⁹ are doubtless produced by extensions of the medium's astral body being used by the controlling entity to establish lines of etheric energy sufficiently strong to write messages with a pencil. Slate writing is usually accomplished by placing a bit of slate pencil between two slates, that have been washed clean, locking the slates together, and giving them to the medium or to some person present to hold. In a few minutes the noise of writing is heard on the inside of the slates, and after a rap is given by the entity as a signal that the work is finished, the slates are opened and found to contain a message signed by some deceased person.

Other writing is produced on blank sheets of paper on which have been placed bits of lead

pencil.

Precipitation.½ Still another phase of writing is known as precipitation. Cases are on record where blank sheets of paper have been covered with writing, voluminous MSS. containing information unknown to the medium, being so received in a short time. Beautiful pictures also sometimes appear on slates or upon paper in the same manner.

The rapidity with which such writing and such pictures are produced leads to the belief that the controlling entity is able to visualize clearly a whole picture, or a whole page of writing, and to transfer bits of pencil, or the various pigments, to the slate or page almost at once. That matter may be made to pass through matter was first demonstrated by Prof. Zollner and set forth in his book, "Transcendental Physics." The experiments with materializations, to be discussed in the next lesson, indicate that dematerialization of matter actually sometimes takes place. The bits of pencil used in precipitated writings, and the pigments used in precipitated pictures, may be materialized from non-material substance, or they may be produced by collecting the minute particles of all substances that exist in the air. But more likely they are derived from existing pencils and pigments and are transported to the place where precipitated in a dematerialized state, to assume the normal physical form again when precipitated as writing or as a picture.

In these cases also, the controlling entity undoubtedly uses the astral body and etheric emanations of the medium. It uses them to build such lines of force as will collect and precipitate the proper materials in the form it has visualized.

Seance rooms.½ Now, before closing this lesson, as I have repeatedly referred to irresponsible mediums and their seances, I should perhaps give a certain warning to the less experienced about seance rooms. Every person should, it seems to me, avail himself, if the opportunity arises, of seeing some genuine psychic phenomena. People of a scientific turn of mind and positive makeup can investigate mediums with impunity. Persons less positive readily become influenced by astral entities if they attend seances, and this is particularly true if they attend developing circles.

It is quite common for the entities controlling the medium to use the astral and etheric energies of the medium to crush any resistance offered to their control of other persons present. They also use these energies to form a point of contact with persons present, following them home and endeavoring to make the contact permanent and take full control. If such a person is mediumistic or sensitive, the astral entities may gain a power to influence, even though the person is unaware of it. Such a person, if no more serious influence is experienced, gets the seance habit, and runs to a medium for advice on every trivial occasion. He becomes a seance addict. The seance room, while it serves a useful scientific purpose, is not without its dangers.

Notes

1. Death and Its Mystery, by Flammarion, Chapter V.
2. Explicit instructions for protecting oneself from the mental influence of another are given in Course 9 Mental Alchemy, Chapter 7.
3. Death and Its Mystery, by Flammarion, Chapter V.
4. Ibid.
5. For authentic examples see Thirty Years of Psychical Research, by Richet, p. 401.

6. Abundant authentic instances of levitation are given in *Thirty Years of Psychical Research*, by Richet, p. 421.
7. For authentic instances see *At The Moment of Death*, by Flammarion, Chapter IX.
8. For authentic instances see *Thirty Years of Psychical Research*, by Richet, p. 443.