

Chapter 6 — The Moral and Ethical Aspects of Spiritualism

from *The Truth About Spiritualism* (1923)

by

William S. Sadler, M.D., F.A.C.S.

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Sources for Chapter 6, in the order in which they first appear

- (1) Carlyle B. Haynes, *Spiritualism versus Christianity* (Nashville, Tennessee: Southern Publishing Association, 1918)
- (2) Isaac K. Funk, D.D., LL.D., *The Psychic Riddle* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1907)
- (3) David P. Abbott, *Behind the Scenes with the Mediums*, Fifth Revised Edition (Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Company, 1916)
- (4) Joseph McCabe, *Is Spiritualism Based on Fraud?: The Evidence Given by Sir A. C. Doyle and Others Drastically Examined* (London: Watts & Co., 1920)
- (5) Horatio W. Dresser, Ph.D., *The Open Vision: A Study of Psychic Phenomena* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1920)
- (6) A. T. Schofield, *Modern Spiritism: Its Science and Religion* (Philadelphia: P. Blakiston's Son & Co., 1920)
- (7) Rev. Samuel McComb, *The Future Life in the Light of Modern Inquiry* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1919)
- (8) James M. Gray, D.D., *Spiritism and the Fallen Angels in the light of the Old and New Testaments* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1920)

Key

- (a) Green indicates where a source first appears, or where it reappears.
- (b) Yellow highlights most parallelisms.

- (c) **Tan** highlights parallelisms not occurring on the same row, or parallelisms separated by yellowed parallelisms.
- (d) An underlined word or words indicates where the source and Sadler pointedly differ from one another.
- (e) **Bold type** indicates passages which Sadler copied verbatim, or nearly verbatim, from an uncited source.
- (f) **Pink** indicates passages where Sadler specifically shares his own experiences, opinions, advice, etc.
- (g) **Light blue** indicates passages which strongly resemble something in the Urantia Book, or which allude to the Urantia phenomenon.
- (h) **Red** indicates either an obvious mistake, in most cases brought about by Sadler's miscopying or misunderstanding his source, or an otherwise questionable statement on Sadler's part.

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V: SPIRIT MANIFESTATIONS IN THE CHRISTIAN ERA (Haynes 48)

What Has Spiritualism Done? (Haynes 58)

[contd] It is the peculiar boast of Spiritualism that it constitutes an **advancement** in the world of knowledge and thought, and introduces a new era of progress into the world. But, getting down to hard facts, let us inquire what it has done. How has it added to the store of the world's knowledge? In what way has it improved the condition of mankind? What great discovery has it made? What great **inventions** has it produced? (H 58)

IV: THE PHENOMENA KNOWN AS INDEPENDENT VOICES (Funk 85)

Against accepting the spirit hypothesis spring up to the mind a score of difficulties. Of course, that **threadbare** one, why should spirits be engaged in a work of this kind? Why not help us to solve some great practical problem, as a government problem, a **great invention?** (F 142)

VI — THE MORAL AND ETHICAL ASPECTS OF SPIRITUALISM

6:0.1 SPIRITUALISM has made great claims,

but it has failed to make good.

It has contributed mighty little to the **advancement** of education, morals, ethics, **invention**, religion, or any other of the arts or sciences of modern civilization.

6:0.2 If the spirits are so wise, why have they never whispered the principles of some new and **great invention** to the mediums?

Why is it that our mechanical inventions all originate in the brains of our natural-born geniuses, or are worked out in the persistent sweat of such men as Thomas A. Edison? What a time and labor saving it would be if the secrets of the wireless-telegraph, or the principles of an internal combustion gas engine, could be secured at a spiritualistic seance. Why is it that these discarnate spirits and spirit beings of invisible space, if they are so interested in human kind, do not whisper to the mediums the cure for cancer, the remedy for infantile paralysis, or the most successful method of treating pneumonia? Why do not these all-wise, omnipresent spirits that hover about our earthly forms, take a greater interest in things that are worth while? Why do they spend so much time telling us where to find lost jack-knives, and other useless trinkets? Why do they waste so much energy in telling us the date on an ancient coin, or the foolish thoughts that went through our heads at some given moment, when there is so much that is worth while that needs to be done on this planet and for its inhabitants? An intelligent visitor cannot go to an average spiritualistic seance, without leaving with the impression that the entities of the spirit land are either infantile, or pure and simple "boobs," when, after all their laborious effort to contact with the living, they indulge in such puerile and juvenile communications.

1. HUMBUGGERY ILLUSTRATED

6:1.1 In my pilgrimages out on the frontiers of science and spiritism, I have had many amusing experiences; experiences which illustrate the fact that neither the mediums nor their alleged spirit controls know the real facts concerning the topic of their discussion. One of the best illustrations I have had of this, and one that has been repeated many times in my experience, is one that occurred some years ago in London.

[?]

[*Note:* See endnote, in which Haynes recounts a seance which has the same elements as the one Sadler reports: a skeptical subject, a non-existent dead sibling, a deceptive spirit, and that spirit's familiarity with the past history of the sitter.]

I had been taken, by medical friends, to consult with the then-reigning medium, the one who at that time was in vogue.¹

She started the seance, in my case, with the statement that she observed that I was more or less of a skeptic regarding spiritualism and the ability of mediums to converse with spirits beyond the vale.

6:1.2 This skepticism I of course acknowledged, and she proceeded immediately to get down to business and pass under the influence of her controls, her spirit guides, etc. She soon said that there were a number of my acquaintances and departed relatives who were present and would like to communicate with me. I inquired as to their identity, and she seemed a little hesitant at first, but proceeded in a rather indefinite manner to say that she thought grandfather was present, a cousin, and then after a moment of hesitation, a departed brother. "You have a dead brother, have you not?" she asked me,

and while I did not reply “Yes,” I said to her: “Well, of those you have named, I should be most interested in holding converse with the dead brother you have mentioned.” There then ensued a half hour’s communication with my alleged departed brother. It was very interesting, and I am free to confess that it would be very difficult to explain fully and completely on purely psychological grounds and the subconscious hypothesis.

6:1.3 I have no reason to believe that this medium had any knowledge of my identity, or knew anything of my past history, but this dead brother of mine certainly did hold a very interesting conversation with me, and while there was more or less of that vagueness and ambiguity that characterizes mediums, especially when they undertake to prognosticate the future, nevertheless this departed brother did show some familiarity with my past history—not very definite, it is true—but still he made a brave stagger at trying to convince me that he knew me as I had been, and that therefore I should recognize him as he was.

6:1.4 Finally, the seance was concluded, and the spirit departed from our presence, and then this medium asked me what I thought of the performance. I told her I thought it was very interesting. She said, “Now you are convinced of the reality of spirit manifestations?” I told her no, I was not, and she said, “How can you go through such an experience as you have just had without admitting the reality of spiritual manifestations?”

And then she was greatly perturbed and considerably angered when I confessed to her that I had never had a brother, living or dead, and that however unique or entertaining the visitation might have been, she had been imposed upon by the spirits, and deceived, and that the spirit who was conversing with me, no matter what his source and origin, was an undoubted prevaricator, as he had endeavored to palm himself off on both of us as the spirit of my departed brother—that I was the oldest member of the family, and that there were no other children except twin sisters, one living and one dead. This technical point I had taken pains to make clear by directly asking him, early in the interview, if he was the spirit of my brother and not the spirit of my sister, and he explained that he was the discarnate spirit of a brother, not the sister.

2. DEGREES OF FRAUD AND DECEPTION

6:2.1 The successive exposure of fraud after fraud on the part of mediums seems only to develop their sagacity and sharpen their wits.

HALF HOURS WITH MEDIUMS. (Abbott 1)

X. Materialization.—Preparation of Luminous Costumes, Method of Presentation, etc. (Abbott 70)

I asked this medium if he had ever seen a medium who could perform any trick which he could not fathom. He said that he had, and related to me that a certain medium, a lady now in the West somewhere, had a secret for materializations that was very fine. Her husband had been a chemist;

One medium tells us how another who is so fortunate as to have a chemist for a husband

SOURCE

and she possessed some kind of a capsule that she could moisten in her mouth

and roll towards the spectators in the darkness,

when it would rise into a luminous vapor the size of a human form

and move about.

There was no odor

and nothing could be seen if the lights were raised;

but on turning them out, it again appeared (A 75).

IX. The Dark Seance—A Deceptive Grip.—Mental Tests—Spirit Voices, Taps, and Lights. (Abbott 53)

In the spiritualistic part of the realm of trickery, fashion has played a not unimportant rôle.

As soon as the first mediums could induce the spirits of the departed to return to this earth and rap on tables and furniture, the fashion rapidly spread and mediums all over the country sprang up with exactly these same powers (A 53).

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has, by his help, developed some sort of a capsule which can be moistened in her mouth

and thrown up into the air in the seance room where, in the midst of total darkness,

it will evolve into a luminous vapor about the size of the human form

and can be wafted about the room by initiating a gentle breeze by means of a fan or otherwise.

It is said that there is no odor connected with this phenomenon,

that if the lights are turned on nothing will be seen,

but that on turning out the lights the mystic form will again appear.

6:2.2 It should be noted in this connection that

fashion—the vogue—has a great deal to do with spiritualistic performances.

In one period we had rapping on tables,

in another slate writing, in another materializations, to be followed by

As soon as a leading medium spoke of his magnetic powers, all of the mediums in the country had magnetic powers, which, strange to say, could act on wood, and could also act in ways in which magnetism has never been known to act (A 53-54).

[contd] As soon as a leading medium started the fashion of having an Indian guide, all of the mediums in the country had Indian guides. Unto this day this fashion is still in vogue.

Some mediums now have as many as forty or fifty guides (A 54).

At some of the materializing seances of a certain medium, as he relates it to me, one of the most amusing features is the frequent disputes and quarrels of this class of persons

over certain guides which he materializes, and which each claims as his own (A 54).

[?]

magnetic powers,

spirit photography,

Indian guides, and so on.

Particularly, it has been found that fashions come and go in regard to

controls and guides.

How much has been done in the name of Katie King, John King, Red Jacket, and so on.

We have the record of serious quarrels and violent disputes between mediums

over the right to have certain individuals for their alleged controls,

one medium contending that another has no right to such a control, etc.

These things have gotten into the newspapers, and have even resulted in personal violence.

[See 5:5.3.]

6:2.3 After all, the quality of the communications from alleged spirits is enough to betray the whole movement.

When Sir Oliver Lodge gets Sir Isaac Newton on the wireless telephone it is interesting to note that we do not get any advanced information on gravitation or the latest developments of the Einstein theory. Sir Oliver is not able to get any help as a result of the progress which Sir Isaac has been able to make on the other side. Sir Isaac merely tells Sir Oliver that he is glad he is studying spiritualism, that he is very happy on the other side, and bids him farewell.

[See 3:6.5.]

6:2.4 When Hodgson communicates with Sir Oliver, through Mrs. Piper, he is not able to give any information on the cipher code which he left behind—he is not able to give any information regarding psychic research which will help Sir Oliver—he merely says: “Hello! I am so happy; all’s well, good-bye.”

VII: GOD CONDEMNED AND PROHIBITED SPIRITUALISM (Haynes 74)

Cannot Foretell the Future (Haynes 75)

Spiritualism pretends to be able to foretell the future accurately. This is mere pretension, for it does not know the future, much less can it foretell it. Mediums, reasoning from cause to effect, may surmise something of what may come to pass, and so may we all, but they have no supernatural knowledge of the future.... They do not know the future, but “they prophesy a lie unto you” (H 75-76).

6:2.5 I have never known a future event to be unequivocally predicted, and then seen it happen as stated.

[See 1:7.5, and 6:1.3 above.]

I have known of many haphazard, ambiguous predictions, that could be twisted around so that they could be said to have come to pass, and this seems to be the habit of mediums.

I remember the case of a patient on whom I was to operate. His wife went to a medium and asked if her husband would survive the operation, and the medium replied, "Yes, if the right surgeon does it." This set the wife nearly wild, and she resorted to the ouija board to ascertain if I would be the right surgeon. But a thunder storm came up and so frightened this highly nervous woman that she gave up the ouija board, became hysterical, and had to go to the hospital herself. I am glad to record that the patient lived, but had he died, the medium would only have called attention to the nature of her advice and the responsibility would have rested upon the person who selected the wrong surgeon.

3. MORALITY AND HONESTY

I: MEDIUMS: BLACK, WHITE, AND GREY (McCabe 1)

In a work which was published in 1914—in German by Baron von Schrenck-Notzing,

and in French by Mme. Bisson (they are not two distinct books, as Sir A. C. Doyle says)—

there are 150 photographs of "materializations" with this medium [Eva C.] (M 10-11).

6:3.1 A few years back there was published in German, a work on spiritualism by Baron von Schrenck-Notzing.

This same book was published in French by Madame Bisson.

This is a work containing about one hundred fifty photographs of materializations of their pet medium, Eva C.,

In the introductory part of his book Baron Schrenck describes the character of the lady (pp. 51-4).

He says, politely, that she has “moral sentiments only in the ego-centric sense”

(that is to say, none);

that she “behaves improperly to herself”; that she “lost her virginity before she was twenty”;

and that she has “a lively, erotic imagination” and an “exaggerated idea of her charms and her influence on the male sex.”

That is bad enough for a now-white Vestal Virgin, a sacred portal of the new revelation.

But worse was to follow; and it was evident to me during the Debate that, while Sir A. C. Doyle twitted me with knowing nothing about these matters, he was himself quite ignorant of the developments of this case six years before. The young woman’s real name, Marthe Beraud,

had been concealed by Baron Schrenck, and her age mis-stated by six years, for a very good reason—she is the “Marthe B.” who was recommended to us in 1905 as a wonderful medium by Sir Oliver Lodge,

and regarding this lady’s character and morals

the baron admits that she has “moral sentiment only in the ego-centric sense,”

and if I understand that definition properly it is equivalent to saying that she has no moral sentiments at all.

The baron further says that she “behaves improperly to herself,” that she “lost her virtue before she was twenty,”

and further that she has a “lively erotic imagination,” and “an exaggerated idea of her own charms and her influence upon the male sex.”

Yet Sir Arthur and Sir Oliver hold up this medium and her performances as the latest manifestations of the spirits of another world in their efforts to communicate with this world.

6:3.2 Now this supposedly immaculate vestal virgin—

this high priestess of the inner spiritualism—as we have previously shown, is none other than the notorious Marthe Beraud,

and who was detected and exposed (in **Algiers**) in 1907! Baron Schrenck was forced to acknowledge her real age and name in 1914 (M 10-11).

[contd] Where, then, are the snow-whites? Does Sir A. C. Doyle want us to go back to the pure early days of the movement? Take the **Foxes**, who began the movement.

In 1888 **Margaretta Fox**, who had married **Captain Kane**, the Arctic explorer,

and had been brought to some sense of her misconduct by him,

confessed (in the *New York Herald*, September 24) that the movement was from the start a **gross fraud**, engineered for profit by her elder sister,

and that the whole Spiritualist movement of America was **steeped in fraud and immorality** (M 11-12).

[contd] **Perhaps Sir A. C. Doyle would plead that this appalling outburst of fraud, which poured over America from 1848 to 1888, was only the occasion of the appearance of genuine mediums.**

Well, who were they?

Take the mediums who founded Spiritualism in England from 1852 onward.

Was Foster white? As early as 1863 the Spiritualist judge, Edmonds, learned “sickening details of his criminality.”

Was Colchester, who was detected and exposed, white?

she of the **Algiers** frauds and numerous other unsavory experiences.

6:3.3 We must not forget that one of the **Fox sisters**,

Margaret, who later married **Captain Kane**, the Arctic explorer—

and who, as the result of his urging, made a clean breast of the whole spiritualistic movement in America—

branded it as a **gross fraud** engineered for profit by her older sister,

and declared further that the whole movement was **“steeped in fraud and immorality.”**

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Was Colchester, who was detected and exposed, white?

What was the colour of the Holmes family, whose darling spirit-control, "Katie King," got so much jewellery from poor old R. D. Owen before she was found out?

Are we to see no spots on the egregious "Dr." Monck, who pretended that he was taken from his bed in Bristol and put to bed in Swindon by spirit hands?

Or in corpulent Mrs. Guppy (an amateur who duped A. Russel Wallace for years), who swore that she had been snatched from her table in her home at Ball's Pond,

taken across London (and through several solid walls) for three miles at sixty miles an hour, and deposited on the table in a locked room?

Was Charles Williams white? He was, with Rita, detected by Spiritualists at Amsterdam in 1878 with a whole ghost-making apparatus in his possession.

Were Bastian and Taylor white? They were similarly exposed at Arnheim in 1874.

Was Florence Cook, the pupil of Herne (the transporter of Mrs. Guppy at sixty miles an hour) and bewitcher of Sir W. Crookes, white?

We shall soon see.

Was her friend and contemporary ghost-producer, Miss Showers, never exposed?

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Or does Sir A. C. Doyle want us to believe in Morse, or Eglinton, or Slade, or the Davenport brothers, or Mrs. Fay, or Miss Davenport, or Duguid, or Fowler, or Hudson, or Miss Wood, or Mme. Blavatsky? (M 12-13)

[See 3:6.11-12.]

Craddock, the most famous materializing medium in England, who had duped the most cultivated Spiritualists of London for years, was caught and fined £10 and costs at London in 1906 (M 15).

Frau Abend, the marvel of Berlin and the pet of the German Spiritualist aristocracy, was exposed and arrested in 1909.

Bailey, the pride of the Australian Spiritualists,

was unmasked in France in 1910.

Ofelia Correlès, the next nine days' wonder, passed among the black sheep in 1911;

and Lucia Sordi, the chief medium of Italy, was exposed in the same year.

In 1912 Linda Gazerra,

the refined Italian lady who had duped scientific men and the Spiritualist world for three years,

came to the same inevitable end;

Or does Sir A. C. Doyle want us to believe in Morse, or Eglinton, or Slade, or the Davenport brothers, or Mrs. Fay, or Miss Davenport, or Duguid, or Fowler, or Hudson, or Miss Wood, or Mme. Blavatsky?

6:3.5 And so the dismal story goes on:

Munsterberg shows up Eusapia Palladino;

they catch Craddock in London and he is fined in the police court;

Frau Abend, the mediumistic marvel of Berlin and the idol of the Teutonic Spiritualists is exposed and arrested;

Bailey, the pride of the Australian Spiritualists—

he of marvelous *rapport* fame—

is unmasked and exposed;

in France Corrales, a short-lived mediumistic marvel is soon cast down in disgrace;

Sordi, the chief of the Italian mediums comes to a sad end,

and the following year Linda Gazerra,

that refined Italian lady medium who held high carnival and duped the scientists for three years,

comes to the same inglorious end;

and Mrs. Ebba Wriedt, the famous American direct-voice medium, met her disaster in Norway. In 1913 it was the turn of Carancini; in 1914 of Marthe Beraud in her new incarnation, “Eva C.” (M 15-16).

Now it will not be seriously disputed that during the last three quarters of the century these mediums or priests have perpetrated more fraud than was ever attributed to any priesthood before (M 1).

Any person who cares to run over Mr. Podmore’s history of the movement will see this.

There is hardly a medium named in the nineteenth century who does not eventually disappear in an odour of sulphur (M 2).

If this is not enough, take another gentleman, Mr. Hereward Carrington,

who has studied mediums for two decades in various parts of the world,

and who also believes that they have genuine abnormal powers:—

Mrs. Wriedt, the famous direct-voice medium, met her Waterloo in Norway.

And so the list goes; mediums are short-lived; three to five years is about all that can be expected of them before they are detected in fraud and publicly exposed. Some clever ones have been able to operate a bit longer.

6:3.6 How long would the priesthood of any cult last—how long would the ministry of any denomination stand—if

in three-quarters of a century it had been convicted of the fraud, immorality, and other unethical behavior

that stigmatizes the priesthood of modern spiritualism?

As one writer said, calling attention to

Podmore’s history of the spiritualistic movement:

“There is hardly a medium named in the nineteenth century who does not eventually disappear in an odor of sulphur.”

6:3.7 Carrington,

who has been a great student of mediums,

and who may be said to be a believer in spiritualism,

was forced to admit that

Ninety-eight per cent. of the [physical] phenomena are fraudulent (M 3).

ninety-eight per cent of the physical phenomena of spiritualism was fraudulent.

4. THE TEST THAT ALWAYS FAILS

VIII: AUTOMATIC WRITING (McCabe 129)

6:4.1 Again and again have I tried, through mediums, when supposedly in communication with some deceased scholar, to get the spirit to dictate to the medium something pertaining to the spirit's professional specialties when here on earth.

For instance, I have a deceased friend, a physician and a very dear friend, and in my investigation of spiritism I have supposedly been many times in communication with this physician—but never have I been able to get the spirit to

There are a dozen ways in which the theory could be rigorously tested.... [One] test would be for one of these ghosts of learned Cambridge men, who are so fluent on things that do not matter, to dictate a passage from an obscure Greek poet through a medium who does not know Greek *at the request of a sitter*.

dictate some passage from some medical authority that I might suggest.

It is a familiar and ancient trick for a medium to recite or write a passage in a foreign language. It has been learned beforehand. But let a scholar ask the spirit of a dead scholar to **spell out** through the ignorant medium *there and then* a specified line or passage within his knowledge. I have tried the experiment. It **never** succeeds (M 145-46).

The frauds were very gross in those early decades. Franklin, **Washington**,

even **Thomas Paine**, sent hundreds of messages from the “Summerland.”

As time went on, **Socrates**, **Plato**, Sir I. Newton, **Milton**,

Galileo, Aristotle, and nearly everybody whose name was in an encyclopædia, guided the automatic writers. When one reads the inane twaddle signed with their names, one wonders that even simple people could be deceived (M 137).

Never could I get the medium to **spell out** medical terms properly,

never could I get the medium to name the diagnosis we made of a certain case which we had in consultation or to cite the authorities investigated at that conference which led to the making of the diagnosis.

In a score of ways I have given these mediums an opportunity to prove that they were in communication with bona fide discarnate spirits, but in every instance they have wholly and completely—yes dismally—failed.

6:4.2 I have talked with George **Washington**,

Abraham Lincoln,

Thomas Paine,

Socrates, **Plato**, **Milton**,

and other of the great minds of past ages,

but in no case have I ever secured from mediums anything from these old masters that would bear the least semblance to the product of their minds when living on earth—and mind you, I communicated with them with reference to the very things they thought about and discussed when living.

I did not ask questions pertaining to their present state in the spirit world. I did not ask for a description of the landscape and geography of spirit-land. I asked them about the very things they authoritatively discussed when living, and they unfailingly defaulted in their efforts to show any degree of familiarity with those subjects in which they were specialists in life.

6:4.3 In this connection I should say that I have tested out mediums by going repeatedly to the same seance and asking to communicate with the same spirit, and thus I have observed a growth or development in the quality of the information imparted to me through the alleged spirit. For instance, in my first talk with the poet Milton, along theological lines, I got little or no satisfaction, but on going several times to the same medium I discovered that she had been reading *Paradise Lost*, so I began having lengthy conferences with the alleged spirit of the poet. But it was all too transparent—

the medium had been posting up

and the quantity and quality of my information was quite largely and evidently determined by the medium's progress in the study of the poet's writings.

[See M 144, where McCabe points up the need, in excluding fraud, to ensure that the medium has not secretly been “reading up any classical dictionaries or works on the subject ...”.]

SOURCE

Another test was that devised by Dr. Hodgson—to leave messages in cipher, though not sealed.

This has also completely failed (M 145).
[See also 3:6.5.]

We shall, of course, presently have an announcement that such a message has been read. Some zealous Spiritualist will leave a sealed message, and will take care that some medium or other is able to read it.

We may be prepared for such things (M 145).

[See 6:2.3, above, where Sadler himself suggests this.]

6: THE TRUTH ABOUT SPIRITUALISM

6:4.4 Hodgson, Myers, and others have left sealed messages, written in cipher,

and so far no medium has ever been able to interpret them, no one has ever approached an interpretation of these code messages.

But some fellow will be enthusiastic for the cause one of these days and will leave a message which has previously been given to some medium, in a spirit of enthusiasm, feeling that the end justifies the means,

and they will score a big point for spiritualism. But so far that test has failed every time.

But mark my words the time is coming when it will (apparently) succeed.

6:4.5 If we could call up the spirits of the departed, and they were really true to their professed identity, we might hear something worth while.

As some one suggested not long since, it would be interesting to get Isaac Newton on the wire and hear what he thought of the Einstein theory of relativity.

We would likewise be glad to hear from George Washington on the League of Nations; what Gladstone thought about the Irish Treaty; or from Abraham Lincoln on the Four-Power Naval Pact. It would be interesting to hear what Alexander the Great might have thought of the military strategy at Verdun.

But, strange to say when the mediums do bring out these dignitaries and sages of a past age, they are much more likely to talk about substitutes for coffee, removable dental bridges, or to discuss some other trifle, the purport of which is to try and convince those present that spirits are real because they can tell you about something you have lost or which has been stolen, etc. The whole business is too trivial and juvenile to be worthy of the serious attention of sober-minded, thinking men and women.

[*Note:* Sadler is alluding to a séance that occurred on the weekend of June 17-18, 1922 at the Ambassador Hotel in New York. It was attended by Harry Houdini, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Doyle's wife Lady (Jean) Doyle. The latter acted as the medium, channelling (by automatic writing) a purported message from Houdini's late mother. Houdini found the message unconvincing because it was written in perfect English, whereas his mother spoke no English, only Yiddish. Houdini published an account of this seance in October 1922 in the *New York Sun*, as well as in his 1924 book, *A Magician Among the Spirits*.]

6:4.6 There was a Jewish fellow who went to consult a medium, and she told him his mother was present. He talked with his mother's spirit, and she gave him messages from other relatives who had passed over, and at the end the medium asked if there were any other questions he would like to ask his mother, and he said: "You know, Mother, we used to have such nice visits in Hebrew, and now if I could just have a little talk with you in Yiddish, then I'd know it was you." But the ghost could not talk Yiddish.

5. MEDIUMISTIC SPIRITUALITY

6:5.1 It does not appear that the mediums are the **sources and centers** of the highest spiritual thought of the realm. Ethical advancement and spiritual improvement do not seem to take their origin or have their root in spiritualism. The men and women who have contributed to the social improvement and moral advancement have not been avowed spiritualists.

They have not secured their information from the discarnate spirits who inhabit the ether surrounding our planet, or who infest the atmosphere which we breathe and re-breathe.

6:5.2 The theological advancement of age after age has not been the result of spiritualistic influences.

The ethical and social improvement of human society has come from

[See illustration Haynes 59, captioned: “Reformers being sent out to enlighten the world. The Reformation and not Spiritualism has ushered in the era of invention and science”]

those daring reformers and intrepid human minds who have essayed to go forth in times of darkness and point out higher and better ways, by means of the light which shone forth from the truth which they proclaimed.

The world has been advanced by men and women who loved light and worshipped truth, whose doings were open, and whose beliefs would stand the clear light and illumination of the severest tests which their fellow men might apply; whereas the mediums, at least in a material way, seem to love darkness more than light, and to keep their cause enshrouded in mysticism, while their comings in and goings out are steeped in secrecy and permeated with mystery.

6. NATIONAL TENDENCIES

6:6.1 In our study of mediums and spiritualistic phenomena, it is very interesting to note that not only waves of fashion—epochs of characteristic behavior—have dominated spiritualism from decade to decade,

but the further fact is observed that spiritualism is directed in its performance, and tends to crystallize its dogmas, differently among different peoples. There is a nationalistic tendency to spirit manifestations.

X: PRINCIPLES OF INTER-
PRETATION (Dresser 123)

Again, one may hold that the original message on the whole is from the communicating spirit, but that many of the subsequent statements attributed to that source are supplied by the earthly penmen. If, for instance, a writer receives a few sentences

containing views in accord with those which he already cherishes as true,

it would be a simple matter unwittingly to enlarge upon these and to produce a book based on them (D 125-26).

Thus if an author, already accustomed to producing works of fiction and books on theosophy receives a brief message from the beyond and becomes accustomed to the process of automatic writing,

it might be a simple matter to give forth a whole volume as if it came from the same source.

6:6.2 It seems that spiritualistic manifestations are liable to take on the current color of the time and place in which they take origin.

It is easy to suppose that a writer might receive from his subconscious centers certain ideas

which he believes to be of spiritistic origin,

and since they would be quite likely to harmonize more or less with his theories of life in general, and his spiritualistic philosophy in particular,

it is easy to imagine that his mind—thus aroused by these ebullitions of the subconscious—would continue to develop it.

Now, suppose such an author has theosophical leanings.

It is quite likely that the whole spiritualistic message will evolve into a theosophical dissertation.

SOURCE

Believers in theosophy might find it credible and apparently wholly genuine (D 126).

XI: THE FAILURES OF SPIRITUALISM (Schofield 198)

Contradictory Necromancy (Schofield 203)

Turning to attempts at necromancy, we find the same trickery and fraud prevailing. These “departed spirits,” as we have already shown, teach different and conflicting faiths in different countries. It is thus found that the disembodied spirits of Kardec in France, of Stainton Moses in England, of Swedenborg in Sweden, of Mrs. Piper in America, give absolutely contradictory messages (S 203).

6: THE TRUTH ABOUT SPIRITUALISM

Such a spirit communication would have special influence with the devotees of the theosophical cult.

6:6.3 We observe that spiritualism in Germany, France, Great Britain and America, tends to run in entirely different channels.

Spirits, apparently, are not in possession of a working program and a universal propaganda. Apparently, they are limited in communicating with the living to the beliefs, tendencies and other influences which are in vogue among the different peoples and nations through which they operate. All of which suggests the purely fallible nature and human origin of the whole phenomenon.

7. THE BIBLICAL ESTIMATE OF SPIRITUALISM

III: ANCIENT SPIRIT MANIFESTATIONS (Haynes 24)

An Ancient Catalog of Magic (Haynes 25)

[contd] The earliest catalog of the various forms of spirit manifestations which were known to the ancients is given us by Moses, who, instructed as he was “in all the wisdom of the Egyptians,” was familiar with all the arts of magic and spirit manifestations among even the initiated of the Egyptian priesthood, many of whom were spirit mediums.

This catalog is as follows:

“There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer.

For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord.” Deut. 18:10-12 (H 25).

[contd] Here, then, is a list of eight different classes of those who dealt in occult and forbidden mysteries. Notice how comprehensive a list it is (H 26).

6:7.1 It is certain that Moses, who, we are told, was “learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians,” was familiar with these occult doctrines,

for he left on record for the guidance of the ancient Israelites, the following admonition:

“There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a necromancer.

For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord.” Deut. 18:10-12.

He here catalogues eight different classes of occult devotees or spiritualistic mediums.

6:7.2 It must be evident from the foregoing biblical admonition that spiritualism, in the time of Moses, was not in good ethical and theologic standing.

If the religious teachers of biblical times believed the mediums of their day were actually in communication with spirits, it is evident that they regarded them as highly disreputable, and looked upon their spirit controls as being of an evil nature. Consequently, we have, all through the scriptures, the denunciation of the practice of seeking information from the dead, with the constant exhortation that the appeal of mankind should be made to the living God.

VIII: TRYING THE SPIRITS (Haynes 82)

The Spirits Deny the Truth of the Bible (Haynes 91)

[contd] The great **test** which the Lord has given us **whereby to try the claims of Spiritualism is as follows:**

“And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter; should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?”

To the law and to the testimony; *if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.*” Isa. 8:19,20 (H 91).

6:7.3 The prophet Isaiah, in discussing spiritualism, says:

“And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and that mutter; should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?”

To the law and to the testimony: *if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.*” Isaiah 8:19, 20.

This then is the **test**. Divine law and the testimony of truth constitute the statutes **whereby we should judge the teachings and estimate the performances of modern spiritualism,**

but how seldom are these spiritistic pretenders of today ever brought face to face with such a tribunal. How seldom are they called upon to pass such tests. All too easily, the ignorant and uninstructed public of today are fascinated with their seances and deceived by their performances.

6:7.4 It must be clear to the reader that the Jews, as a nation, were taught from earliest infancy to have nothing to do with the whole group of mystic soothsayers, whether they secured their information from the stars, the astrologists; whether they got it from evil spirits, the witches; or whether they pretended to communicate with the dead, those having familiar spirits. It is clear that Moses and his successors taught the Jews to keep away from the whole nefarious tribe.

6:7.5 It is an important part of the history of spiritualism to note how it was so utterly condemned by Jewish philosophy, and outlawed by Judaistic theology; and it is even a commentary on the wisdom of Moses that he should, three thousand years ago, and in the absence of all the psychologic and scientific aid which we have at our hand today, diagnose and seek to restrict the occultism of his day as shown by the prohibitions heretofore quoted—it is also a sad commentary on the intelligence and reasoning power of the men and women who live in this supposedly intellectual age, with all the means and methods we have for detecting occult fraud and exposing spiritualistic deceptions, that such large numbers should look with such a high degree of favor upon the spiritualistic pretenses of our modern adventurers, wizards and necromancers.

II: SOME REASONS WHY THE STUDY OF PSYCHIC PROBLEMS BY SCIENTIFIC MEN SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED (Funk 15)

In the ruins of ancient temples the tell-tale speaking-tubes running up to the roof from the altars reveal how the priests in olden times fooled the people who gathered together to consult their gods. These priests caused the smoke from the incense to ascend in clouds to the ceiling and then by a kind of magic lantern made to appear on the smoke the faces of these gods, and the speaking-tubes enabled the priests to complete the fooling (F 30).

[contd] In the apocryphal book "Bel and the Dragon" we are told how Daniel revealed to Cyrus the King of Babylon a trick by which the court priests were fooling him,

inducing him to provide each evening a great quantity of choicest provisions for the great god Bel to eat, but which they and their wives and children ate.

By the neat device of a thin layer of ashes sprinkled on the floor of the temple and on the altar steps,

Daniel was able to reveal the foot-prints of the tricky priests and the secret door under the altar by which they and their families entered the temple

notwithstanding the door of the temple "was shut and sealed with the king's signet."

Daniel was a clever investigator (F 30-31).

6:7.6 In ancient times they also had fraudulent priests.

In the apocryphal book Bel and the Dragon, we are told how Daniel revealed to Cyrus, the King of Babylon, a trick by which the court priests were fooling him,

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Daniel was able to reveal the footprints of the tricky priests and the secret door under the altar by which they entered the temple

after it "was shut and sealed with the king's signet."

Daniel was a good psychic researcher. We need more of his sort today.

8. THE WITCH OF ENDOR

[*Note:* Haynes, Gray, Haldeman and Schofield all review and variously interpret the Witch of Endor story.]

6:8.1 One of the most significant passages in all the sacred literature, with which I am familiar, is that depicting the experience of the Hebrew King, Saul, with the Witch of Endor, and found in I Sam. 28:5-16.

6:8.2 A perusal of this passage of scripture shows, very clearly, a number of things:

6:8.3 1. That they had professional mediums in Saul's day, just as we have them today and that these professional mediums claimed to be able to call up the dead and to put living persons in communication with discarnate spirits.

6:8.4 2. That official decrees had been issued against these ancient mediums, in harmony with the Mosaic injunction,

[Detective Clifton R. Wooldridge of the Chicago Police Department in a published report says, "War against the swindlers, impostors, and blackmailers who operate in Chicago under the guise of clairvoyants, trance mediums, astro-psychics, palmists, magicians, and fortune-tellers, of whom there are about 1500 in Chicago, is being vigorously prosecuted" (Abbot 246).]

much as we are wont, every now and then, to issue police orders against the operation of clairvoyants, fortune tellers and mediums, in our own day;

and that at this particular time when Saul felt lonely and God-forsaken, there had been recent police activities of a very vigorous nature against all this psychic, occult business, throughout the Hebrew kingdom.

6:8.5 3. That after much persuasion, and after being solemnly promised that she should not be arrested or molested, this old woman of Endor consented to call the spirits, and at her petitioner's request brought up the alleged spirit of Samuel.

And as is often the case, enough of plausible or worthy advice is given to serve both to establish the identity of the spirit and create confidence on the part of those who seek information from these sources. It is further suggested that the spirit, in this case at least, operating through the witch of Endor, knew and recognized Saul when the old lady herself was apparently quite ignorant of his identity; this fact tending of course to give the whole proceeding a tinge of the supernatural of some sort;

[This Book of Revelation contains the surviving fragments of a great revelation ... It is preserved in only fragmentary and adulterated form (139:4.14).]

though of course we have here only a very brief and fragmentary record of a very important and extraordinary seance.

6:8.6 4. The whole thing contained quite a rebuke for Saul, in that even the alleged spirit of Samuel pointed out the folly, if he could not get help and succor from the living, acting Spiritual Forces of the realm—if his living God could not help him out of the fix he was in—of appealing to the dead for guidance and wisdom.

X: THE WITCH OF ENDOR (Haynes 112)

Death in Spiritualism (Haynes 118)

[contd] Those who have ever found any basis in this account for believing that consulting with spirits through spirit-mediums was right, will be quickly undeceived if they will consider the reasons for the death of Saul. Those reasons are set forth very emphatically and clearly in the following passage:

The folly of this transaction on the part of King Saul is further shown by a terse statement found in I Chronicles 10:13, 14.

SOURCE

“So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the Lord, even against the world of the Lord, which he kept not, and also for asking council of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it; and enquired not of the Lord: *therefore he slew him*, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse.” 1 Chron. 10:13, 14 (H 118).

6: THE TRUTH ABOUT SPIRITUALISM

“So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the Lord, even against the word of the Lord, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to inquire of it: and inquired not of the Lord: therefore he slew him and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse.”

6:8.7 According to the sacred record, the Almighty was much displeased with Saul because he sought counsel from a spiritualistic medium. We would infer that he only went to this source of help because he was out of touch and out of tune with the higher and Divine source of help and guidance, and the subsequent sad spectacle of his dying a suicide on the hills of Gilboa after the violation of his own royal decree and the Jewish code of ethics in going to seek information from the dead, is but in keeping with the last results we have observed in modern times, of many who seek comfort and guidance at the broken cisterns of spiritism.

V: SPIRIT MANIFESTATIONS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT (Haynes 38)

Voluntarily Yielded to Spirit Control (Haynes 46)

Those who recall ... the experience of Saul, the king of Israel, who went from a spirit medium's seance to a **suicide's grave** ... and the frantic agony of those whom Spiritualism has brought to a suicide's fate,

I know of a number of instances where individuals, like Saul, after seeking advice from mediums and clairvoyants, have likewise filled the **grave of a miserable suicide**.

will surely want more evidence than such a record affords that Spiritualism is from God (H 47). [See also H 56.]

9. CHRISTIANITY AND SPIRITUALISM

X: THE PRACTICAL VALUE OF THE BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY (McComb 218)

[contd] Gibbon, in his famous fifteenth chapter, marks as one of the five causes of the growth of Christianity,

“the doctrine of a future life, improved by every additional circumstance which could give weight and efficacy to that important truth;”

and in the true spirit of the eighteenth century, he goes on to remark that

“it is no wonder that so advantageous an offer (eternal happiness) should have been accepted by great numbers of every religion, of every rank, and of every province in the Roman Empire.”

The historian is right when he thus sees in Christianity the religion of immortality,

though he fails to throw light on the curious phenomenon that

a truth which, on its own admission had been for centuries in possession of the greater portion of civilized men, had proved of small account,

yet in the new religion swept over the Graeco-Roman world and eventually transformed it (McC 218).

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a truth which, on his own admission has been for centuries in possession of the greater portion of civilized men, had proved of small account,

yet in the new religion swept over the Graeco-Roman world and eventually transformed it.

But an equally important question is raised when the sociological effect of this theory is contemplated.

Convince men generally that consciousness ends in the grave, deprive them of that optimism that lies hidden in the heart, however it may be derided by the tongue,

and what right have you to expect enterprise, adventure, the courage of the pioneer, the forward movement of the forces that make for progress and civilization?

It was Renan who said that it would be a fatal day for any nation when it gave up belief in immortality.

His shrewd eye saw that behind disbelief in a life beyond lay disbelief in the value of personality.

Look at Germany, where, among the educated classes, faith in immortality has been scorned as one of the main buttresses of superstition,

and where dogmatic materialism in the person of Professor Haeckel still plants its banner (McC 223-24).

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and where dogmatic materialism in the person of Professor Haeckel still plants its banner.

6:9.3 Again, the idea of Christ's mission being that of a life-giver, and that this life pertains to something unusual and out of the ordinary, is further carried out by the statement of John 10:10, "The thief cometh not but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy; I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

And in the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth verses he further carries out this same idea: “And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand.”

6:9.4 John, it would seem, designed to teach that immortality was conditional upon Christian belief; that the theology of it consisted in the recognition of everlasting life as a gift made possible by the sacrificial mission of Christ in the role of the world’s Redeemer. This seems also to be the purport of the statement of the first epistle of John, 5:11-13: “And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. These things I have written unto you that believe in the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe in the name of the Son of God.” And the apostle Paul seems to have carried out the same teaching in his philosophy, where he says, in Romans 6:23: “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

10. MODERN THEOLOGICAL VIEWS

6:10.1 The theological views respecting spiritualism may be divided into several groups:

6:10.2 a. *The orthodox viewpoint.* The orthodox Christian religions frankly believe and teach the immortality of the soul, and in the absence of any direct instruction as pertains to spiritualistic practices, leave the door wide open for their communicants to dabble with spiritism and indulge in experimental efforts to communicate with the dead.

6:10.3 b. *The Oriental viewpoint.* Both the Judaistic and the Hindu doctrines do not offer much encouragement to spiritualism. The Old Testament scriptures of the Jews seem to teach that there is little hope of communicating with those who have once entered the portals of the tomb.

6:10.4 c. *The Soul Sleepers.* The Seventh Day Adventists and some other sects are inclined to view the status of the dead much in accordance with the teachings of the old Hebrew scriptures, believing that mortals who have closed their eyes in death do not return to this planet, that their records are preserved on high, and that they will be duly resurrected at a future Day of Judgment, there to appear before the Magistrate of all the Universe, to be judged according to the deeds done in the body, and that subsequent to this judgment the righteous enter the Gates of Paradise while the unworthy are condemned to the nether regions.

[?]

6:10.5 d. *The Catholic View.*

I: SOMEWHAT PERSONAL (Funk 1)

The Jesuit, Father Franco, in *La Civiltà Cattolica* (Rome), a supposed organ of the Pope and the Conclave, says, in substance:

Spiritualistic phenomena are real, not imaginary; that no one but a fool can any longer withstand the accumulating testimony in favor of these phenomena; that any further attempt to dispute the **genuineness** of all this testimony is simply absurd;

but to communicate with these spirit intelligences is **wicked**, and has been **forbidden** by the Sacred Roman Congregation:

“As matters stand, it is not allowable’ and the voice of the Vicar of Jesus Christ confirmed the sentence of the Inquisition”—this, in answer to a Catholic woman who asked whether she might attend séances at which she believed her little child came back from the dead and sat upon her knee (F 7).

It seems to be the disposition on the part of many Catholic authorities and publications to

admit the **possible genuineness** of some spiritual communications,

but at the same time to **forbid** all efforts to communicate with these supernatural intelligences.

To dabble with spiritualism is regarded as a **wicked** practice.

It seems to have been officially decreed by the Sacred Roman Congregation that

“As matters stand, it is not allowable.”

6:10.6 e. *The Spiritualistic Viewpoint.*

IX: EARLY CHRISTIANITY AND THE BLACK ART (Gray 90)

As we have previously pointed out, [the spiritists of today] commit the blasphemy of speaking of Christ as a Master Medium, and affirm that the phenomena of the séances are not different in origin, in character and in their objective from the marvels which Christians know to have been wrought by the power of the Holy Spirit at the hands of the first disciples (G 92).

To the spiritualist, Christ is the Master Medium.

All of the Oriental mysticism of Holy Writ,

Take the descent of the Holy Spirit on the waiting and praying disciples, already mentioned, which took place on the day of Pentecost.

and all references to the “Mediator,” the “Holy Ghost,” and what not,

The Spiritists of today do not hesitate to class that sacred scene with a modern spiritist séance—the disciples together with one accord, the sound of the rushing mighty wind filling the house, the appearance of cloven tongues! (G 94-95)

are supposed to be allusions to the power of mediumship,

with its ability to bridge the gulf between the seen and the unseen worlds.

XI: TEACHING OF THE GENERAL EPISTLES (Gray 119)

To the same purport, the transfiguration of Christ, according to [Sir Arthur Conan Doyle], was a “story of the materialization of the two prophets upon the mountain”; and the three tabernacles suggested by Peter were three “cabinets,” in other words, “the ideal way of condensing power and producing materializations”! (G 131)

6:10.7 To the spiritualist, the resurrection of Christ was a master materialization,

a perfect type of the ability of the spirit to materialize itself so that it can be seen, heard, and handled by other living and material beings.

Likewise every allusion of the Bible to “ministering angels,” every reference to “demons and devils,” is assumed to constitute a scriptural backing for the present-day belief in the dogmas of spiritualism.

One spiritualist has said:

[*Compare:* Take from the church the miraculous, the supernatural, the incomprehensible, the unreasonable, the impossible, the unknowable, the absurd,

and nothing but a vacuum remains (Robert G. Ingersoll, *The Ghosts and Other Lectures* [1878]).

“Take out of the Bible all reference to spirits and angels,

and the remainder will be only a mass of fables.”

6:10.8 As we have seen, while spiritualism is not a new doctrine—it is as old as the human race—yet spiritualism as an affiliation with the Christian religion is a comparatively new and recent phenomenon. Only in the last two generations have mediums—those who profess to communicate with the spirits of the dead—claimed to base their teachings and to justify their practices by an appeal to the scriptures of the Christian religion.

[See 5:14.7.]

6:10.9 f. *The Hypothesis of the Universal Mind.* Many sober-minded philosophers of today who are quite averse to accepting the tenets of spiritualism—the doctrine of the dead communicating with the living—are disposed to believe in the existence of a **Universal Spiritual Mind with which the Spiritual Monitors of men may possibly be able to communicate when they are properly attuned.**

1. VIII: TRYING THE SPIRITS (Haynes 82)

Does Not Dare Show Its Face (Haynes 83)

Even the mediums will admit that **the spirits do sometimes deceive**. The records of their deceptions are innumerable. There is the record of the **skeptic** who attended a seance, and gave the impression that he was one of the believers. He asked for an interview with the spirit of his father. After some time the medium was finally successful in bringing this spirit to the seance. And then the following conversation took place:

“How are you, father? Are you happy in the spirit world?”

“Yes, my son; very happy.”

“And how is my poor, dead sister Jane?”

“She, too, is content and happy.”

“And is poor brother Jimmy happy, too?”

“Yes, my boy; he enjoys the spirit world.”

“Oh, father, what makes you lie so? **I never had a sister Jane nor a brother Jim**. As a truthful spirit you’re not in it.” And that seance adjourned the ceremony (H 84-85).

Familiar with Every Event of Your Life (Haynes 85)

But, it is insisted, the spirits tell things which no one present can possibly know. Neither are we sure of that. There may be those present we do not see,—the spirit, not of your grandmother, or wife, or child, but a spirit which has known the history of your family for generations, and who may be **familiar with every event of your life**. That spirit knows your secret acts, it has heard your most secret whispers, and it is not surprising that it can astonish you by revealing things which you believed were known to no one else (H 85-86).