

give the tests for the sealed envelopes until later in the evening.

Meanwhile, should anyone think of such a thing, he can easily examine the little basket, which he thinks I have just used; as it still lies on the table in the front parlor with other discarded paraphernalia, including slates, etc. I use no assistant; so after a time has elapsed, and when by the performance of other sealed readings, suspicion has been diverted from the tests with the billets, my wife retires on some trifling errand. While out, she opens the envelopes in the basket, prepares the sheet of questions, and places it in the Bible; then she re-seals the questions in envelopes previously marked by me, places them in the sides of the basket, raises the flaps and lowers the handle. She then usually enters with some light refreshments for the spectators, which explains her absence with a word.

I continue with other experiments for ten or fifteen minutes after her return; then I gather up my surplus paraphernalia, including the dummy basket, and carry all to the room adjoining the back parlor, where I leave it. I return instantly with the mechanical basket which I place near my own table; and then I give another experiment of some kind.

I now pick up the basket and announce that I have decided to return to their writers the envelopes on the table in front of the screen before attempting to give the tests. I do this as if it were a later notion. I now scoop in the dummy envelopes, and raise the handle, which action covers them up and releases the originals (now sealed). I now distribute to the writers their envelopes, which I can do, as they are numbered as described earlier in this chapter. I request each sitter to hold his envelope until I shall give his test. Then I usually perform some other little experiment before giving the tests.

I now take up my Bible, which I will stake I brought into the room, unnoticed, when I returned with the last basket. I then seat myself and leisurely turn the leaves

through the Bible, reading verses, and giving the tests as before described.

I always first read a question secretly, and then turn by the sheet of paper and begin reading a verse of Scripture. As I do this I permit the front of the Bible to lower enough for the spectators to see the printed pages. This prevents suspicion. Meanwhile, the spectators have forgotten that I ever stepped from the room at all with the basket, and even that my wife retired for some refreshments. Neither did they notice the Bible when I brought it in.

The effect on each person, as I call him by name and describe the "influence" of his "dear one," giving names and most marvelous information, is far superior to what it would be were I merely to read the questions literally, and give the answers.

#### SOME FAMOUS EXPOSURES

PROBABLY the greatest swindle ever perpetrated in the name of spiritualism was recently brought to light in Stockton, California. The medium and his confederates materialized everything from frogs and small fish to a huge boulder of gold quartz weighing several hundred pounds. This latter had to be brought from the mountains with a mule team.

The materializing was done through sliding panels in the walls, while the believers sat holding hands about the opposite side of a table, and loudly singing sacred hymns. They had the only door to the room locked and sealed, and never dreamed that the spirits who brought the quartz from the mine were mules.

Thousands of dollars were invested in this "spirit mine," the believers stacking their money on the quartz as it lay on the table at a dark séance, and receiving deeds in return for their money, which the spirits dematerialized.

The medium established, or had his spirits establish, a

"Treasury of Heaven," for the faithful to deposit their money in, and on which they were to receive fifty per cent interest. This interest the believers continued to receive at dark séances from the spirits for a time. Each sitter's interest was found on the table stacked in front of him when the lights were lighted. When the spirit bank became insolvent and the chief medium disappeared, the believers were out about thirty-five thousand dollars.

No less a personage than a millionaire of Tacoma, Washington, is said to have contributed largely to this spirit fund. I had known of this case for some time before the exposure (conducted by a performer engaged for the purpose), and knew that certain interested persons were contemplating bringing it about, in order to rescue certain estimable persons from the clutches of these mediums. This was successful; and the confederates of the medium signed written confessions in the presence of one of the most devout of the believers, and a gentleman who is otherwise very intelligent. Upon this the gentleman was greatly crestfallen, but he still insists that there are certain mediums who are not impostors; and that certain mediums in Chicago who produce spirit portraits are genuine.

A full and very interesting account of this exposure is given in the *San Francisco Examiner* of March 3 and 4, 1907.

I could report enough cases of materialization to fill a volume. These I know of, from various sources, and in every case they were invariably fraudulent. I will give a short account of a materialization which a very expert medium, who is on friendly terms with me, witnessed. The gentleman was originally a minister, and afterwards began investigating spiritualism, as he was a believer in it. He hoped to become a medium; and at one time paid two lady mediums of some renown, who reside in Chicago, three dollars a sitting for three sittings a week. These sittings were conducted for the purpose of developing this gentleman in mediumship. He continued this for a long time, but

he was no nearer to being a medium than he was in the beginning.

At one time he detected one of the sisters passing a slate to the other, and substituting another in its place. He saw the edge of one of the slates protruding from behind the dress of one of the sisters. They never knew they were discovered as he said nothing, but this "opened his eyes." After this he investigated everywhere, and at every opportunity, and grew to be a very expert medium himself.

Recently, when in Los Angeles, he visited a séance conducted by a medium who claimed to be a Buddhist priest. This medium was known under the name of "The Reverend Swami Mazzinanda." He had an altar in his home, constructed something like those in Roman Catholic churches. He had various candles and images on this altar, including an image of Buddha, and also a number of mystical figures. It was a great mixture of "fake" Buddhism, Roman Catholicism, and modern spiritualism. The medium also wore the costume of a Buddhist priest at his séances.

This "priest" held services here for the faithful. He conducted all in Hindoostani (?), his native tongue. He chanted, prayed to Buddha, etc., all in a queer-sounding "gibberish." Certain evenings of the week were devoted to "soul-travel," and certain evenings after the religious services a "Black Chapter" was held.

The gentleman whom I have mentioned attended one of these dark séances. He sat with other spectators around the room in perfect darkness. The spectators were not required to hold hands, so great was their faith. Finally, in the darkness, a queer-looking, vapory, luminous form floated around in the air and paused in front of the spectators. My friend slipped down quietly on his knees, and gradually worked closer and closer to the luminous form, until he could detect that the vapor was a kind of luminous "cheese cloth." He did not desire to expose this "priest," but he desired to have the "priest" know that some one had discovered him. My friend accordingly took hold of the

gauze and gave it a very slight downward jerk. He then immediately returned quietly to his seat.

There was an immediate pause in the discourse of the "priest," who had really been floating this form on the end of a stick. Everyone knew that something had happened, but no one but my friend knew what it was. The "priest" then said in his slow, peculiar, eccentric and measured tones, "I have received a very great shock; and I will be unable to continue further this evening." The next day, when in conversation with some of the "faithful," this "priest" stated in his peculiar manner of speaking, and with intense earnestness, that which follows: "Last night I received a very great shock. I was just in the middle of the 'Dark Chapter' and the spirit of the Master, Krishna, was out. Having spent the greater portion of my life on the Himalayas, my right eye has become injured by the snows." Then pointing to his right eye, he added, "My right eye has a defect in it which you cannot see; but on account of that, I can only see in the dark with it. I immediately turned my right eye downward and I looked! I distinctly saw a lady's hand reached out toward my robe in the darkness, and this hand took hold of it and jerked it lightly just like this." The "Reverend Swami" here illustrated, by slightly jerking his coat downward. It was very amusing to hear him, in great seriousness, relate this in his low and measured accents to his faithful followers.

Shortly after this, when the *Los Angeles Herald* was conducting a crusade against the numerous mediums of that city, and when it had an exhibit in its windows of the confiscated material of some of them, this "Buddhist priest" was arrested and imprisoned for some of his practices.

Hereward Carrington

More Tricks of "Spiritualists"

"MATTER THROUGH MATTER"

THERE is one very clever "test" that is sometimes performed which would seem to show that something of this sort is accomplished. It is, however, nothing more than an ingenious trick, and this might be a good time to explain its *modus operandi*. The general effect of the illusion is this: The medium requests some one to assist him in an experiment in which he is going to attempt to pass "matter through matter." As the test is one in which a confederate might easily be employed, he is very careful to choose some person who is well known, or whose character is above all suspicion. If this were not so, the entire effect of the test would be lost upon the investigators. Having secured his assistant, he hands him, for examination, a solid steel ring, just large enough to slip on and off the hand and arm easily. The ring is perfectly solid, and may be examined by anyone desirous of doing so. When this part of the performance is finished, the medium and his sitter then join or clasp their right hands (as in handshaking), and the sitter is instructed not to release the hand for a single instant. To "make assurance doubly sure," however, the hands are fastened together in any way the sitters may desire; the hands being tied together with tape, *e. g.*, and the ends of this tape tied and the knots sealed. The tape connects the wrists and the hands of the medium and his sitter, and this tying may be made as secure as possible. A piece of thick cloth is now thrown over the two hands and the lower part of the arms, concealing them from view. With his disengaged hand the medium now takes the iron ring and passes it up under the