of one of the hated aristocrats who had found asylum with the doctor during the Red Reign, she indignantly characterized the revelations as a tissue of falsehoods. Thus was virtue ever rewarded.

PSYCHICAL RESEARCH AND THE PHYSICIAN.

BY J. DANFORTH TAYLOR, M.D., EAST BOSTON, MASS.

SIR OLIVER LODGE, an eminent English physicist, has recently delivered lectures in this country upon the subject of "Discarnate Intelligences, Telepathy (thought transference without the use of the senses), and the Reality of Psychic Force."

Many physicians of a skeptical nature will laugh at the idea and pass it by with little or no thought as to the consequences. It is most essential, however, that medical men should realize the import of such influences and use their utmost power to combat such theories.

In England, where the whole country has been stirred up by the teachings of Sir Oliver Lodge, Dr. Conan Doyle, and others, a great wave of mediums and fakirs has overflowed the island, reaping a rich harvest from the unwary and credulous.

After one gets a message from a departed loved one and has had mental troubles relieved, the next step is to seek the same measures for the relief of bodily ailments. Here lies a danger that may invade the province of medicine.

Several years ago, the author of this article pointed out, in a paper entitled "Emotional Religion and Mental Impairment," the danger of brain lesion under extreme emotional stress.

The same danger to the people exists today as a result of indiscriminate experiment and investigation in "spiritualistic" fields.

The craze for "psychism" is liable to spread through all ranks of society, the result being an accentuation of the increase in morbidity, in neurasthenia, and in downright insanity.

The freak religions tend to become medicinal. They are offered for their healing properties, and persons accepting them and not dying of the first ailment suffered, give them the credit for working a miracle. A Biblical text is often used as the basis of authority for the founding of a healing cult, such as the eleventh and

twelfth verses of the nineteenth of Acts: "And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul; so that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them."

Sir Oliver Lodge has been justly criticized as being incapable of good scientific work along those lines because of his lack of training in biology and psychology, and partly through temperamental reasons, whereby his bias unconsciously lowers his critical standard, so that he is continually giving the benefit of the doubt to mediumistic phenomena and omitting to take obvious precautions against fallacies.

Scientific belief should depend solely on the weight of evidence and not on the controversial usefulness of some hypothesis. Before a super-normal explanation is invoked, it is a good rule of philosophy to exhaust the possibilities of the normal, and so coincidences, as an explanation, can be excluded only when the chances against any particular combination are almost infinite.

Scientific proof also demands the possibility of the repetition of the observations under conditions which are understood or can be controlled in order that verification of the facts may take place.

Sir Oliver Lodge's book, "Raymond," is an example where his bias has unconsciously lowered his critical standard; the work being full of such defects. His simple trustfulness is also shown in his report on the work of the medium, Eusapia Palladino.

The record of "Mrs. Brittain," Sir Oliver's latest medium, is worth studying. She made claims of "clairvoyance" in 1910, in England, advertising her marvelous powers of thought transference. One of the English police, disguised as a farmer, paid her a visit. She not only made a number of incorrect guesses about his circumstances, but her so-called "clairvoyant" powers failed absolutely to recognize his connection with the police. She was arrested and convicted for fortune telling.

The things which scientists call untrustworthy observations, Sir Oliver calls facts. The same applies to Conan Doyle, who is most dogmatic in his statements.

Is it not a waste of time to make observations so long as the conditions are such that fallacies cannot be excluded? To accept conditions of a so-called "medium," to submit to inferior

conditions, is to unconsciously lower one's own critical standard.

Under the emotional and unscientific conditions of the "sittings" with the mediums the judgment becomes warped and one becomes impressed by phenomena which leaves the critical reader quite cold.

William James pointed out that "continuous sittings will almost always produce a cumulative effect on the mind of the sitter whose affairs they implicate, and dispose him to the spiritistic view. It grows first plausible, then possible, then natural, and finally probable in a high degree."

J. F. Rinn, a former member of the Society for Psychical Research, who took part in the exposure of Palladino, and who has made a hobby for years of exposing so-called "supernatural" phenomena, recently offered \$5,000 if anyone could produce a medium who could offer under scientific conditions, the slightest evidence of communication with the spirit world or supernatural feats of any kind.

There is no limit to the range of scientific inquiry; but knowledge can be advanced only by taking every possible precaution against fallacies, and when this is done, phenomena requiring supernormal explanations are conspicuous by their absence.

The realm of spiritualism affords an excellent field of investigation for the psychologist and psychiatrist, and also for the sleight-of-hand performer who would learn new tricks.

As psychology is the description and explanation of states of consciousness as such, all the emotions, sensations, desires, volitions, reasonings, decisions and cognitions come within the scope of its investigation.

The demonstrable manifestations of the hidden workings of the subconscious mind are well known to science. They give a natural explanation for "spirit communications."

Just as the gods of any religion are inductions from experience, and religious "experiences" are states of consciousness and are therefore proper objects of scientific investigation, so the investigation of "spirits," as such, comes within its scope.

The physician is supposed to be a scientific man, trained to use rational methods of research to prevent and alleviate disease, whether mental or physical. It is his first duty to protect his business, his own peculiar method of

specialized industry, by which his intellectual labor obtains its pecuniary reward.

His method of preserving public health is based on the knowledge derived from a study of the various natural phenomena. While medicine is not an exact science, its votaries strive to use scientific methods in all their undertakings.

Primitive man assigned life to all objects, animate or inanimate. All life is of the same kind and, therefore, the primitive philosophy assumes the possibility of life passing on to another form, a point of view that is illustrated in the folk tales and myths, so widespread, of men being changed into animals or trees.

This theory survives in advanced forms of religions in the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, as in Buddhism, where the same vital essence, it is assumed, may appear successively in a tree, in an animal or in man. In another direction it leads to the belief of the incarnation of a deity in human form, a belief found in many religions. (A Hebrew peasant, called Jesus the Christ, was an example, a believer in spirits and demons.)

Men in the primitive state pictured all disease as being due to some active, living force that has found its way into the body. The conclusion is a natural one and, in a way, seems to have anticipated the modern germ theory.

A cure, therefore, involves the expulsion of the hostile power and the medical treatment was usually exorcism; for the imagination of primitive man conceived the germ as obliging enough to take on tangible shape.

Some modern religions have developed a dualistic theory, whereby a spirit or soul inhabits a material body and leaves that body at the time of the death of the physical body. It bears a definite relation to the theory held or attributed to primitive man, and is most readily adopted by the credulous, emotional and simple mentality.

Just as the priests and parsons are the mediators between a god and mankind, and develop a powerful organization for personal profit from the "believers," so the medium acts as the middleman between the "spirit" and the message-seeker.

Both systems appeal to the primitive and childlike mind. The search for discarnate intelligences has already become more than a

cult and its adherents are many. Drawing the attention of man from the realities of this world to the frictions of an imaginary one, has resulted in religious doctrines entailing much misery to mankind.

So far as civilization has any definite aim, that aim must be the increase of human happiness. The means to the attainment of this object are material comfort and prosperity. The removal of ignorance and the growth of knowledge are, therefore, necessary to the development of happiness.

A system of dogmatic religion of any kind, such as "chasing the spirits," depraves morality, benumbs the mind of man and debases human nature.

Where in the realm of science has a discarnate intelligence been found? Is there any reason why we should not apply the same methods of investigation in studying the unknown that we use in studying the known?

Has science ever demonstrated any dualistic nature of man, any separate entity apart from the matter of which the body consists? Mind is looked upon as the functioning power of the brain, but how can a mind or intelligence exist apart from the brain, a material product?

In 1916, the Open Court Publishing Company, of Chicago, brought out a book entitled, "Behind the Scenes with the Mediums," by D. P. Abbott. Any physician who wishes to become a "medium," a message-reading, slate-writing, and table-tipping expert, is referred to this work.

It is the duty of the physician to combat all cults that are not based on scientific facts. And furthermore, it is time that all medical men place themselves on record as *defenders of science* and as opponents of those things which impede progress, impair the mind of man, and subjugate his mentality to a parasitic class.

Go to the Psychopathic Hospital and tell the physicians there that you have had messages from the dead, that you are in communication with spirits, and that you have "psychic" powers and see what will happen. You will at once be classified as one who is suffering from delusions, hallucinations or illusions, according to your story, and the chances are that you will be detained for further observation, as to your sanity. "Who ever heard of a psychiatrist who believed in spirits?"

Modern medical science has fought its way

from the primitive belief in exorcism and magic, to the rational administration of various remedies for the cure and prevention of disease.

Every step in its advancement has been met with opposition by organizations claiming divine authority, and the office of mediator between the known and the unknown world. Without the use of incantations, prayers, holy bones, holy relics or blessed shirts, medical science has become one of the true and actual saviors of the human race.

The realm of spiritualistic phenomena is largely "bunk or fake" and sleight-of-hand. It is the sum total of all the superstitions of the past, the destruction of which has always been the chief purpose of science. The science of psychology and psychiatry gives a natural and sane explanation of spiritual phenomena.

Let the medical profession unite for further victories in the interest of humanity.

Clinical Department.

PERFORATION OF THE CECUM. A CASE REPORT.

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It is desired to report the following case because of interesting points in postoperative findings and because of the several postoperative complications with eventual complete recovery.

M. M. C. was seen at 4 A.M., December 23, 1918, after having been in bed one week with an attack of epigastric pain, nausea, and vomiting, and obstinate constipation accompanied by temperature varying from 97.2° to 100.4°. Because of a previous history of a chronic "stomach trouble," with acute exacerbations, the present attack was diagnosed, in the absence of lower abdominal signs, as probable gall stone colic, by the attending physician. Not until 1 A.M. of the day I was called in had there been any signs or symptoms of a possible lower abdominal lesion. At this time, however, the temperature had gone to 102°, there was violent pain in the whole lower abdomen, and rigidity in the right lower quadrant.

Examination showed an abdomen typical of acute, ruptured appendicitis with beginning general peritonitis. The upper abdomen was soft and only very slightly tender to palpation. There was no evidence of obstruction. Immediate operation was advised and accepted. The