

photography, for obvious reasons of prudence, usually desires. Sometimes this fraudulent exposure of the photographic plate is made before the sitter appears. The plate (left undeveloped in this case) retains, of course, the latent image. The same plate is used again to photograph the sitter, and, on being developed, presents, of course, two images—a sharp, clear one of the victim, and a faint one of the 'spirit,' through whose fuzzy and diaphanous form the sitter or his surroundings may be clearly traced. The very indistinctness of the 'spook's' features makes it, of course, difficult for the sitter to quarrel with the medium's positive statement that the 'spirit-form' is that of some near and dear one 'not lost but gone before.' (3) Fluorescent substances are also cleverly used in connection with 'spirit photography.' One of the substances favored for this purpose is bisulphate of quinine. This compound has one curious property that mediums have not been slow to exploit, to the bewilderment of their clients and the great profit of the charlatans. The bisulphate is almost invisible to the eye, but it photographs nearly black. The intelligent reader will at once realise the uses to which the substance can be put by a medium bent upon introducing a 'spirit form' into the portrait of a client. He paints the photographic background over with the compound, except in the places where he wishes the 'dead' to appear. And there, beyond the true focus of the lens, he allows to remain impainted just so much of the light background as will make a suitable 'spook' appear in the photograph. The part of the background that is treated with the fluorescent bisulphate of quinine will, as stated, appear almost black, while the 'spook' shaped part thereof, that has not been so treated, will appear of a lighter tint. A piece of white paper placed behind the sitter (say, against the background), and treated with the fluorescent substance, will, of course, serve the same purpose, at less trouble.

(4) A few years ago the *Australian Photographic Journal* described as follows another and rather novel method of producing so-called 'spirit' photographs: 'Take a negative of any supposed "spirit" that is to be represented, put it into the printing frame with the film side out; lay on the glass side a piece of platinotype paper with the sensitive side up; clamp in place the back of the printing frame and expose to the sun for half a minute. Now place in the printing frame the negative of another person to whom the "spirit" is to appear, and over it put the previously exposed sheet, film side down; expose to the sun for two minutes until the image is faintly seen; then develop in the usual way, and the blurred "spirit" photograph will appear faintly to one side or directly behind the distinct image. Sheets of paper with different "ghost" exposures can be prepared beforehand.' (5) We may add that pictures (paintings, drawings, engravings, photographs, etc.) are often used by the mediums for the purpose of photographing and projecting as 'spirit forms' into the portraits of their victims. Even the weasel has been known to sleep. And the imposture just referred to has been several times exposed by the lack of caution of the mediums in selecting well-known pictures (as, for instance, a famous portrait of Napoleon and a noted painting by N. Sichel) and making faint photographic reproductions of them do service as the counterfeit presentments of deceased persons that have come back out of the vasty deep to hold silent converse with their dear ones among the frowsy surroundings of the medium's séance parlor. We have before us a telling exposure of this kind of fraud by Mr. W. M. Murray, a prominent member of the Society of Amateur Photographers of New York.

This article has run into such length that space is not left to describe various other methods of 'spirit photography.' Much, for instance, might be written (6) regarding the methods of substituting for the 'honest' plates brought by the sitter, 'spook' plates prepared in advance by the medium—and the same with intent to deceive. Much, too, might be said regarding (7) the methods, old and new, of 'faking' plates, plate-holders, and the insides of cameras; and (8) we are assured that a wide range of imposture is made possible by the capacity to affect, by X-rays, a photographic dry-plate inside a camera without uncovering the shutter. We will merely conclude this rather lengthy, and somewhat random, description by a statement (for which we can personally vouch) that will enable our readers to estimate in some degree the wide possibilities of fraud which exist in connection with this matter of mis-called 'spirit photography.' (9) The writer of these lines is acquainted with every detail of what he believes to be a new method of impressing so-called 'spook' images upon a photograph. In this particular method (which is entirely by trick photography) the sitter brings his own plates, camera, and printing-frame. And these alone are used—there is no substitution. The sitter is,

moreover, invited to develop the plates, or to be present during the whole process of developing and fixing. Even under the microscope the developed plate shows no trace whatever of anything suggestive of a 'spirit form.' The sitter, moreover, may personally place the plate in his own printing frame, seal all securely, and be present during the process of printing. Everything seems fair and above-board and 'honor-bright.' But *gatta ci cova* (as the Italians say)—things are not what they seem; a piece of photographic conjuring, unseen and unsuspected by the sitter, has taken place; and the print from that innocent-looking plate shows a fraudulent 'spirit-form' beside or above or about the clearer image of the client. But that is not all. A second print from the same plate may show no 'spirit-form' whatever; a third may display quite a different 'spook' from the first; a fourth may print yet another or none at all; and so on. The whole method is within the power of a photographer of very ordinary skill in his profession—plus a little knowledge of, and practice in, a ruse of the 'hanky-panky' order. In the skilled hands of an artist, it would, moreover, permit of a reasonably wide range of even more than mere fuzzy resemblances as between the alleged 'spirit-forms' and the portraits of persons that have actually lived. All this would depend upon the artist's memory of faces, his stock of portraits, and his skill in delineation. For this feat (or freak) of illusive photography, there is no need of the contraptions described in a previous paragraph from the *Australian Photographic Journal*. Should our hope of throwing into book form our thoughts upon the general subject reach fruition, we shall illustrate and describe some of the curious pseudo-spiritistic phenomena of which this freak of illusive photography is capable. Otherwise, we shall be willing to describe the method to Catholic writers who may be desirous of honestly investigating the width and the depth and the height of fraud and imposition which are possible in connection with so-called 'spirit photography.' Satan can, of course, dip his sable finger into many a pie. And (as frequently stated by us) there occur at times (though very rarely) in non-mediumistic spiritism phenomena which do not admit of a natural explanation. But both common sense and a well-known principle of Catholic practice (to which we referred in our issue of December 17) alike forbid attributing to a preternatural source so-called spiritistic phenomena which not alone may be, but are, reproduced and even surpassed by such purely natural means as the tricks and wiles of the illusionist. It is not, we think, known—or at least it is very little known—that projection by a good magic lantern forms a ready and serviceable means of exposing a considerable range of 'spirit photographs.' A lantern slide or transparency is made from the suspected negative (the negative is vastly preferable to a print for this purpose, as the print gives a fainter and 'flatter' image, and even this is considerably marred by the grain of the photographic paper appearing in an exaggerated form upon the screen). The transparency is projected with electric or lime light on a white screen (a smooth, white wall, if of sufficient size, is still better). The larger the projected picture, the better, so long as the clearness of the image is maintained—say, twelve to sixteen feet square. Enlarged to this extent, good photographic transparencies of séance 'spirits' will often (as when taken from masks, prints, engravings, paintings, wash-drawings, etc.) afford interesting and instructive revelations of mediumistic methods.

In this connection we may quote the following extract from Dr. Marcus's *Monism* (English Translation, p. 69) on some of the phenomena of mediumistic spiritism: 'Against the reality of the ghosts cited by the spiritists may be mentioned the senseless actions by which they manifest their supposed presence. One notes the meaningless, childish behaviour of the so-called spirits, whose intellect is satisfied by throwing about kitchen pans or other articles in use, and such idiotic proceedings. Samuel's ghost, when summoned by the witch of Endor, at least behaved reasonably. And if it should be said that during their lifetime on earth these spirits were of a low type—rowdy fellows—whose progress consists in this, that they may now in the astral body frighten people with harmless jokes, still it is very curious that it should be just these fools of whom we receive reports, never of an earnest ghost with whom we could exchange an intelligent sentence.'

The Right Hon. Christopher Pelles, Chief Baron of the Exchequer in Ireland, who has passed his 76th birthday, is easily the doyen of the judiciary in the United Kingdom. It is 33 years since Mr. Gladstone appointed him to the office of Chief Baron, which he was destined to be the last to fill. His long career on the Bench has been marked throughout by great ability, dignity, and independence.

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