

because gravity takes care of us. Once surrender that, and undertake to depend upon some supposed private source of energy, and one would instantly discover he had an engineering problem of a high degree of complexity. If one assumes, as some have done, that such spirit is composed of, or associated with, some sort of matter, and that navigation is accomplished by an act of the will, it will not change the foregoing factors in the problem at all.

2. Suppose, as some have done, that disembodied spirits lose their hold upon matter, and that they do not remain at the earth. Then, if they remain at the point where separation from the body took place, in an hour the earth will have moved forward one hundred and twenty-five thousand miles. But over the earth there is certainly a death every minute all the time, and such are left in the rear by the earth never to return to them, for the movement of the earth is not a circuit, but an apparently endless drift. Think of the dead of the earth for the thousands of years since man has lived upon it ! On this view, the spirits might be seen like the tail of a comet reaching backwards for millions on millions of miles—the trail of the dead !

In any view, time and space and energy cannot be ignored or ruled out.

At *seances*, the reported phenomena are mostly of a physical sort; the trance of the medium being a physico-mental phenomenon. The phenomenon of sound implies the expenditure of energy. It is a vibratory motion of the air or other elastic body, and in order to produce it some antecedent force must be spent. It may be produced by mechanical means, or heat, or electricity, or by the muscles. Its production does not imply any specific method, any more than articulate speech implies a person, as Faber's talking-machine and the phonograph prove.

Let us consider some of the more subtle phenomena that are reported. First, as to so-called conditions. One of the primal ones of these for such phenomena as the movements of bodies and materializations, is said to be darkness. This is of so much importance that it must be fully attended to. To one who has not paid any attention to what has been done in molecular science within the past fifteen or twenty years, the phenomena of light may and probably do seem to be due to a unique agency, as much as heat or electricity ; therefore he looks upon light as he looks upon the others in the hierarchy of the physical sciences, and expects that in its absence a potent agency or kind of energy is lacking. That this idea and conclusion are all wrong will be apparent when it is recognized that *what we call "light" is a particular sensation in the eye, and that to produce the sensation there is no one antecedent that is essential*. Press the eye with the finger in the darkest night, and one will see a ring of light with great distinctness. An electric shock, a bump upon the head, will also give one the sensation of light, and in the absence of other aids to a judgment, no one could tell what was the antecedent of a given light sensation.