

# GERMAN SPIRITS PLAY PRANKS IN SOCIETY CIRCLE

Occultism Described as 'Fashionable Disease' Before 'Society.'

CONFUSES SIMPLE TRUTHS.

Strange Phenomena Sometimes So Disturbing That the Law is Needed.

By KARL H. VON WIEGAND.  
BERLIN, June 10.—Germany like many other nations, is turning more and more towards occultism, mysticism, spiritualism and all the other isms as a reaction from the war, and the revolution with its concrete and actual horrors.

Everybody Likes It.  
The soul shut up in a prison house longs to break its fetters and go forth into a world, visionary and nebulous it may be, but nevertheless, comforting by reason of its very speculative and contemplative character.

At a session of the "Society for Physical Studies," Dr. Aigner delivered a lecture in which he pronounced occultism to be a fashionable disease, a slogan, under the guise of which each one formulates his own conception of the obscure, something that hobbles around between hypnotism clairvoyancy and spiritualism.

Creates Vagueness.  
It is due to this general vagueness on the subject that every murder or other sensational event is made the reason of occult interpretations. Occultism as a fashion, has two injurious effects—first, that every day occurrence which formerly could be disposed of calmly and scientifically is now made and confused by mystical complications.

In the second place, everything that has been learned to be of benefit in occult studies, so that the serious student finds it much more difficult to form any conclusions.

He then proceeded to make a few suggestions which he thought might serve to call a halt to which he pronounces a physical epidemic. What we understand by the term occultism are certain occurrences connected with the peculiar endowment of suitable persons. Such persons exert a hitherto unexplained influence upon their surrounding.

Hypnotism is the occultism of yesterday, a characterization which is quite justifiable. Hypnotism ran the entire gamut of scientific rejection and abuse by the laity just as

is the case today with the occult phenomena.

These phenomena are table tipping, clairvoyancy, telepathy and similar manifestations, with which scientific knowledge will have nothing more to do, but is accepted by the broad masses with startling avidity.

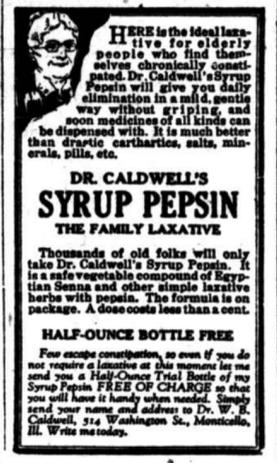
From time to time these phenomena assume such disturbing proportions that the law is obliged to intervene. The most striking instance of this kind was the so-called "Spook of Dietersheim," who in spite of the fearsome name, was a little girl of eight, whose appearance in a room was the signal for the potatoes, turnips and carrots to fly through the air, execute difficult pas de seuil, and otherwise conduct themselves in a manner very extraordinary for vegetables of the common garden variety.

Public excitement grew apace, until a well-known magnetic healer in Munich broke the spell by pronouncing the spook a swindle. But the matter did not end here, as the physicians, veterinarians, teacher and burgo-master all vouched for the occurrences as well as for the impeccable conduct of the "spook."

Dr. Aigner thinks that it should be a social-hygienic duty neither to throw a veil over such things, but openly to confess that there are things in the world not dreamed of in the philosophy of the laity, and courageously to probe these phenomena.

## Tooth in Larynx Killed Aviator in High Fall

LAUSANNE, Switzerland, June 10.—A tooth driven through the larynx caused the death of the Swiss aviator, John who was killed when his airplane fell several thousand feet. None of the aviator's bones were broken. An autopsy disclosed that except for a tooth found in one of his lungs there were no internal injuries.



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