

As prefaces, as a rule, are *not* read, the Author would feel obliged if the present one be taken note of, by way of exception.—C. R.

PREFACE.

-:0:-

WHAT a fuss there is about Spiritualism ! Some

VV say (and among them are big swells of science), "It is all bosh !" and others (and among them big swells of science too), "It's true." Of course the known natural laws tell us, "It can't be," but the stupendous facts nevertheless do occur -"There's the rub." To make confusion worse, there are impostors who imitate paltry manifestations; these humbugs speculate safely, since we have plenty of folks who believe theirs to be the only explanation—and pay for it. If imitation is to go for the real thing, why be afraid of a thunderstorm, when at the theatre you can see how the thing's done? Imitation goes very far nowadays, and we would not wonder at hearing of a poor youth falling desperately in love with a pretty talking doll, if of the proper size! But, oh bother! there are mediums also, who do genuine work and call it conjuring, because it pays better. Then there are private mediums, who could do great work, but are cowards and traitors for love of mammon. To make a perfect mess of it, we have mediums who mix when the real is not profitable enough. Only the other day they caught a fellow in the act of making false spirit photographs, after having done plenty of good ones. They put him in prison, but he was told (whether by himself or somebody else we don't know) that if he would confess that all was trickery,

he would be set free, and the scoundrel did so confess. and brought other people down too. He was condemned to prison nevertheless. Served him right. But he is at large again and produces photographs once more. Mediums can do wonderful things ! ! But people now say (with a remarkable twist of logic), " It is all a swindle-because he (the traitor, mind) confessed it." People can reason wonderfully! Some say it is the devil. Perhaps they are well acquainted with that gentleman. Heaven knows. Some wise folks say, "It will soon die out; " and take a snuff after this grand remark, but generally sneeze it off again. Very funny, it has been said so during the last thirty years-and the poor dying thing is kicking and doing well. We would, in this perplexing medley, rather rush at once to the big fellows of science, who say it is " all bosh," but we are not made wiser by it, for it is said only by those who have not investigated and don't know anything about it. They don't explain, but snub it off with, "Much above that sort of thing !" or spoil séances by meddling with conditions and introducing tricks of their own make, then boast of having exposed the farce-like schoolboys, breaking a pane, then running away, crying, "We have smashed the whole house !'' "Ah, these manifestations are so trivial, so ridiculous," a whole lot of grumblers assert. They would be right if there was nothing but table jumping and tilting, but to judge things by their rude beginnings would be like despising a lovely flower for its dirty root; besides, how ridiculous not to believe in spirits, yet give rules how they must behave ! The grumbler himself may stand in the creative scale nearer to his ancestor, the ugly gorilla, than to the other endthe human form divine. It would not be fair, then, to measure his intelligence by such a silly remark.

"What is the good of it?" may be dismissed as of equal weight, since every one ought to know there is nothing in this world without a purpose. "But it has always to be in the dark." Has it? Only with a few experiments, just as in chemistry. Darkness! Welcome objection to those who have no light in their heads? Thus if we listen to the twaddle of arguments from the one side and to the extraordinary statements from the other, we are in a perfect maze. To believe in the facts requires an awful amount of credulity; to swallow the explanations of the sceptics much more, and nice doses of stupidity too. We must not forget one amusing blunder of fashionable ignorance. namely, the idea that Spiritualists want to create a new belief; and these objectors are the most matter-of-fact people, for they are pretty tired of belief, and want tangible evidences. Now, what does all this mean ?-- what is it ? Yes, what is it ? It is a hard nut to crack. Let them try their jawbones on it, and we'll look at the funny side and see how our heroes, Professor Molecule and Dr. Protoplaster, set to work to nip it in the bud, and take hold of the so-called materialisation. What is that? Take a queer creature, called a medium (a genuine one, mind) and bind him hand and foot ; sew him up, seal, pin and nail him to the ground, that he can't move an inch : out comes a life-like figure. It is an optical delusion ! Nonsense, it walks and talks, pinches you, and may give you a box on the ear if you don't behave. Then it's a mechanical trick. Fiddlesticks ! It may happen in your own room, medium coming alone, and being searched too from top to toe. So our heroes did, and let us follow them in their further clever proceedings :---



Here we introduce-

4? Parf. Carpenter

PROFESSOR MOLECULE, F.R.S., X.Y.Z., B.I.G.A.S.S.* and DR. PROTOPLASTER, his assistant.

* The latter distinction he obtained for his clever dash against Spiritualism, from the Anti-Spiritualist Society (now defunct).



They bind the medium (a mere lad) rather tightly, and the Professor puts his private seal, newly made, on a lock of his hair. After mutually admiring their cleverness, they take their seats before the curtain.

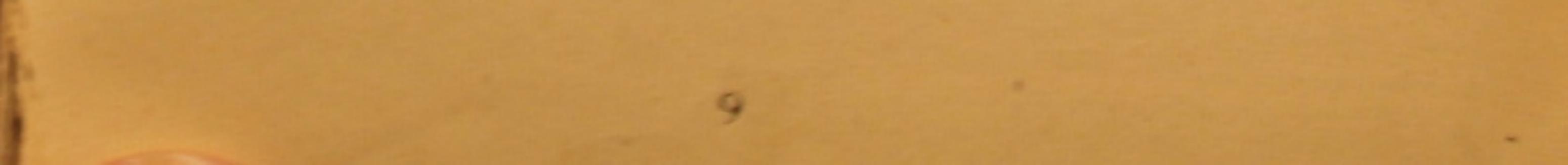


As a little singing is required to draw power, they begin, somewhat sarcastically, "When shall we three meet again?" and lo! There's the figure! Did you ever! It vanishes - off they bolt into the cabinet, and --





Would you believe, there's the medium exactly as before. The Professor snuffles about the seal. It's all right. Extraordinary! They feel their own legs to see whether they are subjective or objective!





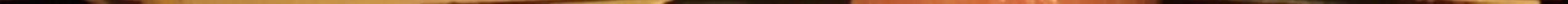
They are in deep thought, and call up the whole lo

of natural laws. "You have no idea what conjusors can do !" is the last result of their mental struggle (we have heard that motto before). Confound the binding ! They his upon another clever test.



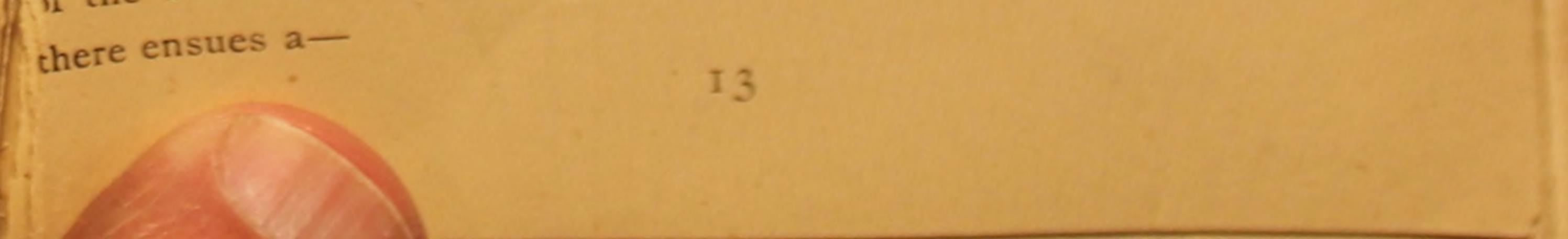


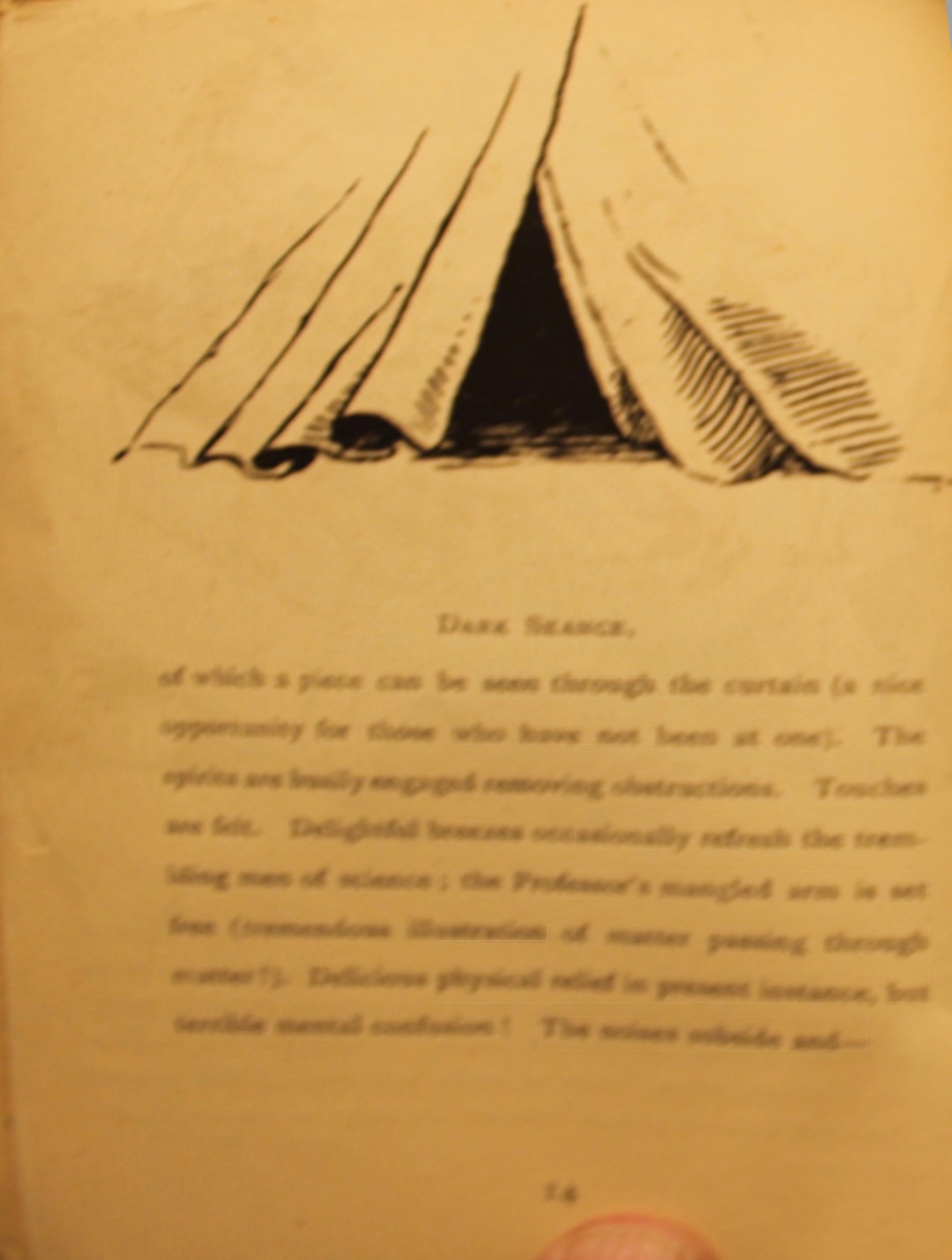
gence, too !" Not a sound to be heard, although they prick up their ears like rabbits ! Figure says, "Good-bye." Photo. taken immediately afterwards. Result: vide previous picture. Isn't it odd ? Now they help the medium down again, and—





Down with a crash goes the whole structure! the best compliment to their architectural skill, but the poor fellows don't half like it, because they are awfully entangled, and (first sign of dawning belief) bray the "kind spirits" to release them. Whereupon the medium loses the shutters, takes hands of each, not heeding the warning of the Professor that his arm is between the steps of the ladder, and







They find themselves amugly seated at the table, refreshments provided. That will do't They feel inclined to give in ; but as this is exactly the same situation as before the sitting (the Professor kindly opening proceedings with a glass of wine), the idea strikes him that this might be a splendid specimen of *unconscious* cerebration—a theory formerly so *exceedingly* convenient and handy, but which non't mush now. But also't the contents of an ink-bottle on the Professor's face are the cause of suppressed langhter. He doesn't like it, and asks, "Will the kind spirits remove the isk-spots 3 then I'll believe." The spirits, however, tap out, "Can't do it; it's a black set." Now the suppressed langhter barsts forth wildly. This is unfortunate, for a membrane fiashes through his mind, culminating rapidly into a.-





RATE OF THE SECT.

The modeum, is setteralizes, is placed in the bath, with modeum encours around to show any attempt at getting on. A jught of water throughtlensly left behind. The Protomer, now sure of having the medium in the trap (the sestement as well), strikes up with signer, and somewhat entitiessity :--



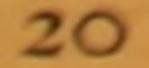
"Let us gather at the river" = and splash comes a foretaste of the river, as explained in the picture. After being cured of a slight cold = a natural





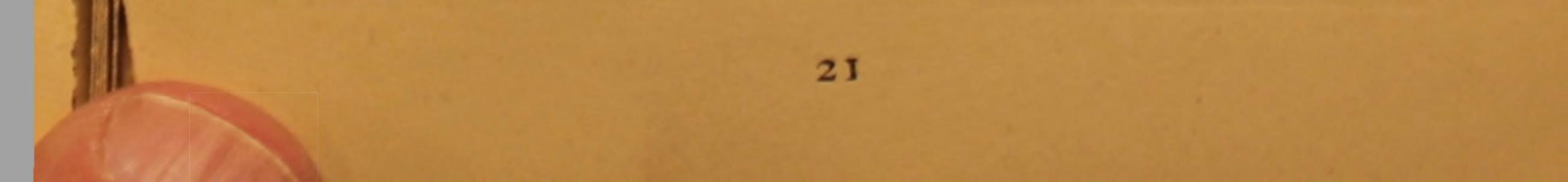
That's too rude!-down comes the cat! This horrid warning of what might be their own fate puts them quickly on the alert. Puffs of smoke come; they sniff, smell-can't be sulphur-nor yet powder-it's more like

"baccy!" With trembling steps and scientific caution they approach the "chamber of horrors," and-





Find the medium quite at ease, smoking his pipe and dangling his legs cheerfully. The two inquirers take to their heels in a twinkling, dropping spectacles on the ground.







Profoundest thoughts again! Dr. Protoplaster (being secretly given to phrenology) tickles his *bump of perception*, to put this noble organ in good working order. The Professor's reflections take a most diabolical turn. He reasons thus: If matter passes through matter, what matters it if I pass a bit of matter through the body of the medium ?it's only matter.



They carry out their design, with the consent of the medium, and sai him furiously to the ground, like a butterfly in a collecting-box.* The medium, in deepest trance, drops his pipe, looking like a corpse! With tottering knees, this time quite stupefied, they fumble to their wats (something like a voice whispering "Manslaughter!" haunting their minds). There is no mutual admiration of their cleverness. With befitting tact as to the solemnity of the occasion, they sing, or better stammer, the "Dead March" from Saul; when—

* 'the sathor holds himself not responsible for the truth of this part, and unhesitatingly refuses his positive belief in it; nor would he encourage similar stampts in other circles, as it might be attended with disastrous results to the health of the medium, C, R,

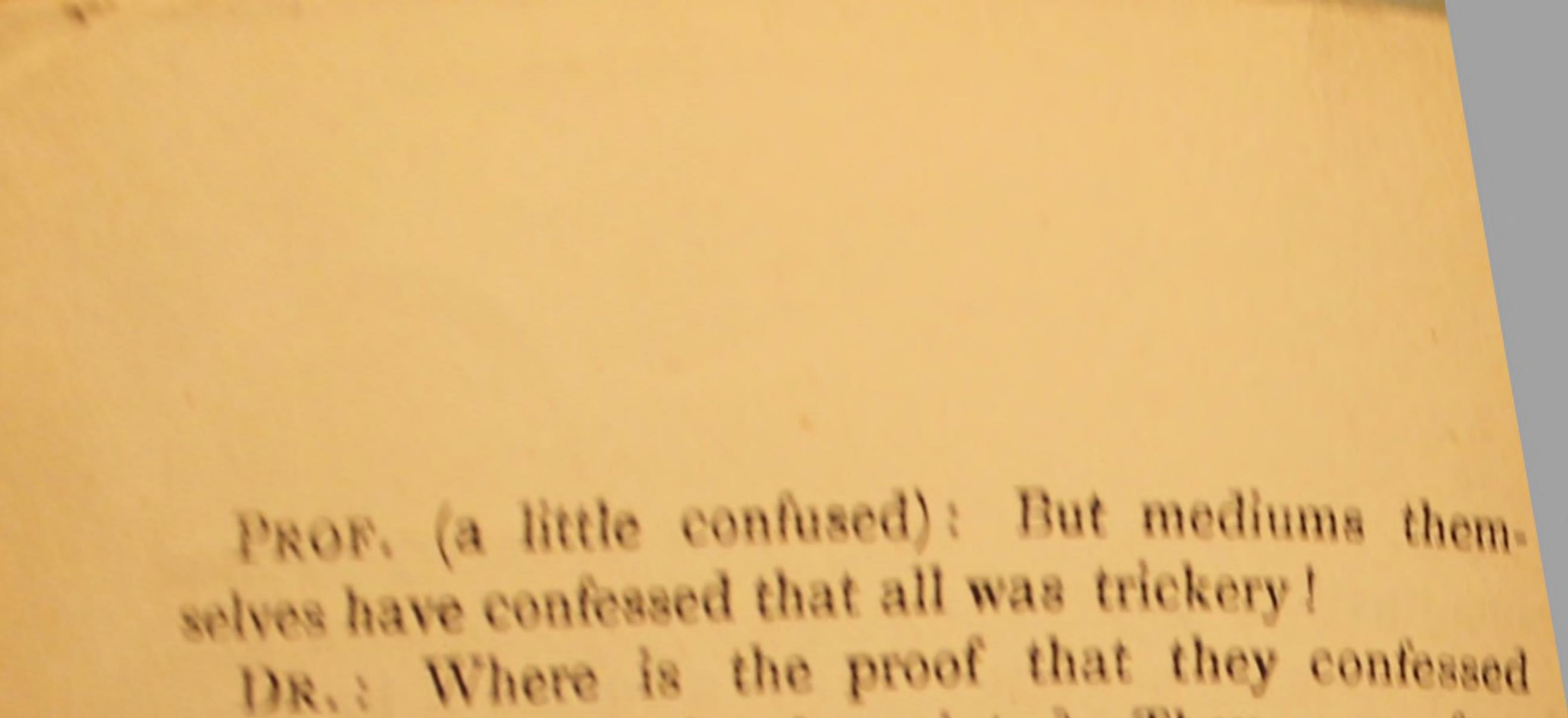


Ah-eh-eh-oh-uh!!! Heaven protect us! Horror of horrors! Nail and hammer protrude with giant arms! They don't stop for further development, but, terrified, clear the room in a space of time not measurable by earthly instruments.



This shock proved too much for both. We now find them in the sick-room with their old friend, DR.

FAIRREASON.



the truth ? Must they be saints ? They may often be low creatures in spite of their mysterious spiritual gift, like many poets and artists, who inspire crowds, and return home poor weak mortals themselves. Besides, I know cases where such confessions proved wise, for fear the listener should go cracked in learning the real truth. PROF.: But I know of people renouncing that belief. DR.: Only cowards and traitors. PROF. : And people who tried a séance but got---DR. : Nothing-hem ! Take, for instance, a couple of eggs, some butter and flour, and there is certainly a pancake; but put together a bundle of people and have a sitting, but there may be no manifestations. The Spiritualist very aptly says: "This power has been sent to command, not to obev." PROF.: The presence of sceptics-DR.: Does not interfere, as you know, and you

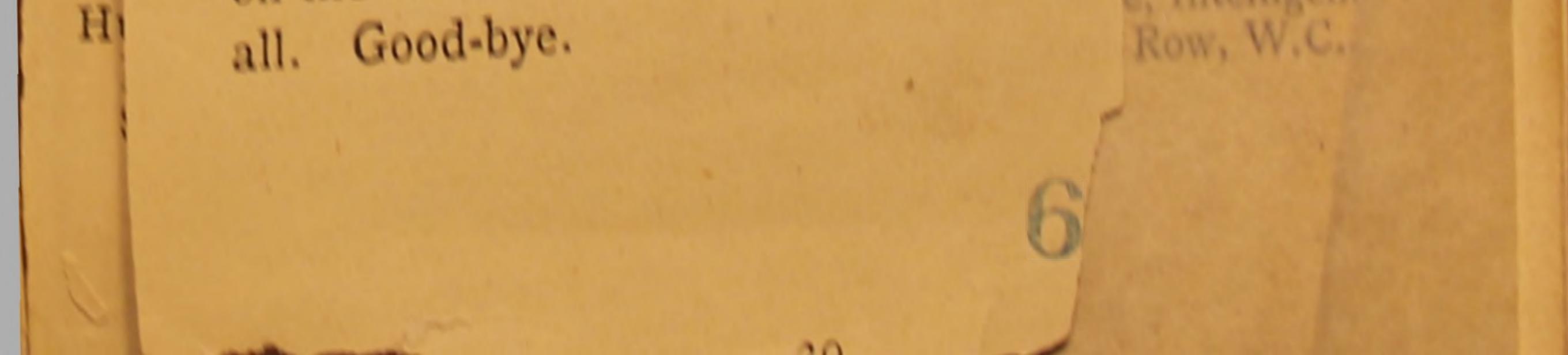
have paid dearly for that lesson ; but a certain class of conceited snobbish know-alls seem not to take with the spirits, and it is amusing to hear them boast, "In my presence things won't come off;" while in point of fact the spirits don't like their precious company. Ha! ha! ha!

PROF. : But you must admit most inent of acience are against it. DR.: Name me any one who denies a er thor honest investigation. Here a long awful pause set in. The Prof crept under his blanket, turned round and re et the Hon. INTER INTERPORT sighed, coughed, sneezed, turned round once no Hop. Alexand stared at the doctor, who continued :--DR. : And why consult authorities upon one Shine blan B ject in matters relating to another ? A chemist Dawa: Horr M. Gully. be very clever at analysis without finding any new; a doctor may cure nicely and s' ilfully Mr. D. H Ir. Williar twaddle nonsense about other things. Wevers, Mr. J. N. 7 may play like a god on his fiddle, pia -and talk like a fool. PROF. (rather timidly) : So it seems ded to "The Manage we made fools of ourselves to cry it dowr DR.: At last you have hit the nail Goted to the Hist but don't fret about it, my boy, there alism. J. Burns folks sharing the same fate with you. ny. been a little too cocksure, because of Sexton; the c dous results of science, and you deserved the 1st of on the knuckles, and have to be toned a e, Intelligent

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PROF. (2 se as have .: W th ath?

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FINALE.

gi. Prot^e laster overheard this conversation with crise delight, and felt secret pleasure in seeing his seny master soundly beaten. He cunningly and sictly contrived to get the current papers on the crisct, and pursued with growing interest such dicals as the old and respectable London Spibent Magazine, the popular Medium and Dayk, the fashionable, critical Spiritualist, and evere Psychischen Studien; also the prominent

tican papers the *nner of Light*, and the of Sc the Sp. List, &c., and was soon tainly to chects of his arrogant à priori judgpeople in a all must who prefer study to manifest at there was " something in it," and he "This pcn his change of views cautiously and obey." is good master, who can as yet swallow PROF.: oses, and whose recovery, we are grieved DR.: I ns very doubtful; but of whose ultimate have paid ay be able to inform the reader in due with the boast, "I



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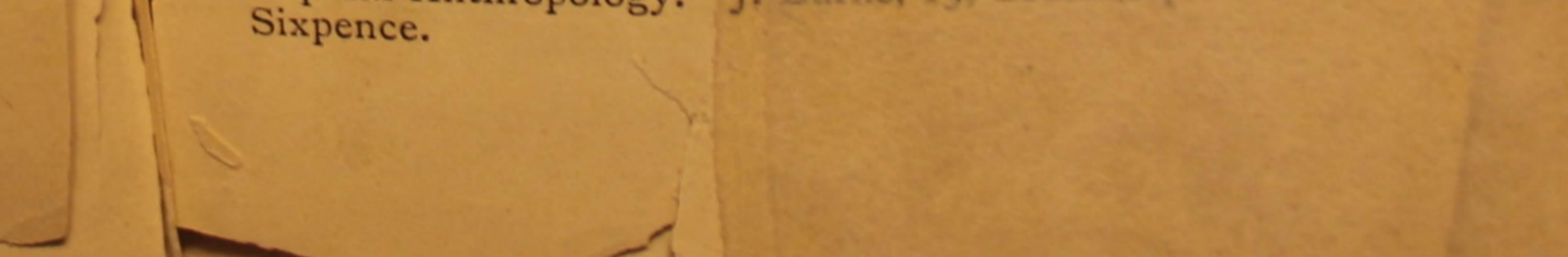
trala); and many other ladies and gen lemen.

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