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### ACCOUNT OF A SPIRITUALISTIC TEST.

SUPPLIED BY MR. ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE.

NELLIE MORRIS.

The following interesting statement of communications received through various mediums as to a person unknown to the writer, but whose identity was ascertained by full inquiry, was written at my request, from notes taken at the time, by my friend, General Lippitt, of Washington, a gentleman who has made a study of Spiritualistic phenomena for 30 years. General Lippitt is a lawyer as well as a soldier, and is equally distinguished in both capacities. In 1834 he assisted De Toqueville in the preparation of his great work on Democracy in the United States. In 1849 he was chairman of the Committee in the Constitutional Convention of California; and he was Assistant Counsel for the United States in the Department of Justice from 1877 to 1882. As a soldier he served through the Mexican war and the war of the rebellion, receiving from the President and Senate the brevet of brigadier-general. He is the author of four treatises on various branches of military science, one of which, on "The Special Operations of War," was highly spoken of by our *Army and Navy Journal*, *United Service Gazette*, and *Saturday Review*.

With regard to the case here recorded, I am informed by Mr. Myers that most of the mediums concerned have been accused of being impostors. As regards two of them, Mr. Keeler and Mrs. Ross, I am myself satisfied from repeated observation and test that they are very remarkable mediums. As regards another who is said to have confessed both her own and other mediums' impostures, General Lippitt has sent me a letter which is appended to his narrative. General Lippitt informs me that he is not in the habit of publishing any accounts of the remarkable séances he has attended, and has only done so twice in his life. If the numerous tests in the case of "Nellie Morris" are all the result of imposture, it would imply a continuous concert and conspiracy between seven different mediums, in order to give satisfaction to a single individual who was already a Spiritualist, but from whom no advertisement of the mediums concerned was to be

expected. Those who disbelieve all Spiritualistic phenomena will adopt this theory; but for such persons none but personal evidence will have any weight.

ALFRED R. WALLACE.

1827, Jefferson-place, Washington, D.C.

*December 18th, 1887.*

Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace.

MY DEAR MR. WALLACE,—In fulfilment of my promise I now send you a full statement of how I became acquainted with "Nellie Morris."

In May, 1885, I attended several "materialisation" séances of Mrs. Beste in this city. Before going further, I should state that my daughter, Carrie, had departed this life in July, 1882, at her grandmother's residence in the interior of New Jersey, and that I am positive that Mrs. Beste knew nothing of me (except my name), or of my family, or that I had ever had a daughter.

At one of these séances, held on the evening of May 8th, a female spirit-form (veiled, as usual) came to me, calling me "papa," affectionately greeting me as my daughter, and giving me her name. After a few moments' conversation she retired. Later in the evening I asked "Daisy," apparently a child-spirit, who usually comes and talks to the sitters at Mrs. Beste's séances, whether she had seen the spirit that had come to me as my daughter Carrie. She said she had, and gave me a description of her that corresponded with her appearance in life, and added, spontaneously, "that my daughter had a dear friend in the 'spirit land' named Nellie Morris." In answer to my questions, she said that Nellie Morris's father had been our Minister to Turkey for about 11 years: that she was a beautiful and lovely young lady that had died, she did not know exactly when, but some two or three years ago, in Philadelphia.

Next day I examined the records of the State Department and found that E. Joy Morris, of Philadelphia, had been our Minister to Turkey from 1861 to 1870. I at once wrote to two old residents of Philadelphia to know if E. Joy Morris had a daughter named Nellie. From one of them I received no answer; and the other replied that he knew nothing whatever of the family.

At the séance of May 17th, my daughter came to me again. I asked her if she knew Nellie Morris. "Yes," she exclaimed, "and she is my best friend"; adding that they were constantly together. In answer to my questions she said that Nellie was quite tall and graceful, with beautiful blonde hair and blue eyes; that she had died of consumption some three years ago in Philadelphia; that her father had been our Minister to Turkey during a longer term than any of our Ministers abroad. I informed her that Daisy had told me about her friend, and that I had written to two gentlemen in Philadelphia for information about her. She asked to whom I had written. I told her. "Papa," she said, "write to the proprietor of the Hotel St. George, in Philadelphia, and he will tell you all about her." I promised to do so, and asked her where that hotel was. She pondered for a

moment and then said, "I think I see Broad-street, and—Walnut-street; but I am not quite sure."

Next day I wrote as my daughter recommended; simply asking the hotel proprietor first, whether Mr. E. Joy Morris had had a daughter Nellie, and second, if so would he describe her to me. In answer I received from him the letter appended to this statement marked (B).

At the subsequent séance of May 24th, my daughter having again come to me, I told her I had had an answer from the hotel proprietor confirming all she had had told me about Nellie Morris. She seemed much pleased, and then said that Nellie was an Episcopalian, and that they had sung together some of the Episcopal chants. She then sang for me two or three verses of an old Venite, and part of the old Gloria in Excelsis chant. (Although my daughter had died a Catholic, she had been born and brought up in the Protestant Episcopal Church, which fact the medium could not have known.)

Afterwards, at the séance of May 26th, a tall and graceful spirit form came to me saying "Nellie." I asked for her other name. She made repeated efforts to give it but without success. I said, "Is it Nellie Morris?" She answered "Yes," and was evidently much pleased at being recognised. I said, "May I stand up by your side?" "What for?" she asked. "That I may see how tall you are." "Certainly," she answered. I did so, and found by comparing her with my own height that she was at least 5ft. 6in. high. Then followed a long conversation with her in which two or three members of the circle took part. She cheerfully answered all the questions that were put to her, and in a manner indicating a marked individuality and a bright and cultivated mind. *Inter multa alia* she told us that she had lost her mother when a baby, that her relations with her stepmother had not been harmonious, and that her life had been a sad one, but that "she was happy now"; that her early childhood was passed in Constantinople, where her father was United States Minister; and that she had died at the Hotel St. George, in Philadelphia, when she was about 19 years old, of "a galloping consumption" in January, or "at least in very cold weather," saying this with a shiver. I told her that Carrie had already spoken to me about her, and that I had received a letter from the proprietor of the Hotel St. George, corroborating all that Carrie had said. "Yes," she said, "but he flattered me in one thing. My hair is not golden, but flaxen." I asked her to give me a lock of it. She could not then, she said, but would do so at another time.

At the séance of May 28th, Nellie Morris came to me again. I showed her a photograph of my daughter, asking her if she had ever seen any one like it. She said at once, "It is a picture of my Carrie, but not so pretty as she is now." Before retiring she asked if I had scissors. I had none, but a member of the circle seated near me handed me a pair, which I placed in her hands. She then cut off for me a lock of her hair, which I have carefully preserved. I enclose it herewith for your inspection in an envelope marked (C). On examining it by daylight I found it to be really flaxen, but with a golden shimmer in the sunshine. Within the last few days I have examined it again, and whatever may be the cause, it is certainly *now* more golden than flaxen.

At a séance held June 16th, Nellie came again, and sang for us the old Gloria in Excelsis chant entirely through.

The next séance of Mrs. Beste that I attended was at Onset, on the southern coast of Massachusetts. The cabinet was simply a corner of the room, across which a dark cloth had been stretched. Nellie Morris again came, giving her name, and saying, "Do you remember me? I passed away with consumption, 19 years old. Am very fond of Carrie."

I saw or heard nothing more of Nellie Morris until March 22nd, 1886, when I attended a séance held in this city by P. L. O. A. Keeler. There was no cabinet; only a curtain of black muslin, between four and five feet high hung across a corner of the room; the medium sitting *in front* of the curtain. Writings on slips of paper were thrown or handed over the curtain by a hand that was sometimes visible and sometimes not. All of them were recognised by members of the circle as coming from departed friends. One of these writings was addressed to me, and signed "Nellie Morris." I feel perfectly sure that the medium had never heard her name mentioned. Since then, through the same medium, writings have come to me in the same manner and with the same signature; and all of them in the same feminine hand.

On the 1st of July, 1886, on my way to Onset, Massachusetts, I stopped over a few hours in Philadelphia. I found the Hotel St. George at the corner of Broad and Walnut streets. I showed the lock of hair I have mentioned to Mr. Ward, the proprietor, and asked him if he recognised it. He said instantly, "It is Nellie Morris's." Finding him to be a decided sceptic as to all spirit manifestations, I cut my conversation with him short, asking him to give me Mrs. E. Joy Morris's address, which he kindly did. I went at once to her residence, and was politely permitted an interview with her in company with her daughter. I asked Mrs. Morris if her husband's daughter Nellie had not died some years since. She answered in the affirmative. I remarked that she was said to have been a lovely young person. After hesitating for a moment, she said, "Yes, lovely—*in appearance*." On my showing them the lock of hair they both exclaimed at once that it was Nellie's. I found them entirely ignorant on the subject of spirit manifestations, and they listened with astonishment to my narrative respecting Nellie Morris's return, and corroborated in every particular the statements Nellie had made to me, except her intimation of a want of entire harmony between her stepmother and herself, of which I had made no mention. In answer to my questions Mrs. Morris said that Nellie attended St. Luke's (Episcopal) Church; that she was not much of a singer; that she attended the Church Sunday-school, and she supposed she could sing the chants with the congregation. Mrs. Morris asked me as to my own daughter's character; and when I told her that when in good health she was full of fun, and had a decided talent for good-natured mimicry, she observed that Nellie was just like her in this respect, and it was not surprising that they should be attracted to each other.

This narrative is perhaps already too long, but I cannot close it without a brief mention of some further facts in the case which I think important.

On the 19th of July, at Onset, Massachusetts, I had a sitting with Mrs. Carrie M. Twing, a writing medium of unimpeached honesty and honour, to

whom my name even was unknown, and who could never have heard of Nellie Morris. On reaching my lodgings after the séance and examining what had been written, I found a long letter beginning "My dear Papa," signed "Carrie"; and another one beginning "My dear Friend," signed "Nellie," saying, among other things, "Carrie and I are inseparable."

At several subsequent séances with Mrs. Twing I received letters through her hand signed "Nellie Morris," speaking always of Carrie in terms of great affection. At a séance with her as a "trance medium" on July 24th, "Ikabod," an eccentric, but very sensible "control" of hers, who speaks in a man's voice, said to me, "You have a friend here, Nellie Morris; she was introduced to me by your daughter, who is her companion." And at a similar séance on July 29th, he said, "Nellie Morris wants to get through you at her family, who are hard to approach, and she wants to remind you of the lock of hair she gave you." The members of this "Ikabod circle" were all strangers to me, and I had never uttered a word to them or to the medium respecting Nellie Morris or her lock of hair. And at a writing séance with Mrs. Twing on August 1st, in a letter written to me through her hand, the signature being the pet name of my departed wife (Carrie's mother, who died in August, 1859), it was said, "Nellie, the dear one of our adoption, is a source of perpetual sunshine." I would send you these letters written through Mrs. Twing, but for the fact that they are written on the same sheets with others of a private nature purporting to come from near relatives, and from which they cannot be detached.

On July 10th I had attended a materialisation séance of Mrs. Ross', at Onset. I will not occupy space by a minute description of the conditions under which she sat. Suffice it to say that they were such as to render confederacy or deception of any kind on the part of the medium physically impossible; and I had never mentioned Nellie Morris's name to the medium or to her husband. A female form, veiled, came to me and drew me towards the curtain. In answer to my inquiry as to who she was she could say only "Morris." I insisted on having her first name. After some unsuccessful attempts to give it, she retired, discouraged. I then asked "Bright Star," the medium's "control," to try to obtain for me the spirit's first name. She reported that it was "Ella." I said, "Are you sure? Is it not Helen?" "No." "May it not be Nellie?" "Yes; but the name as I hear it from her is 'Ella.'" The spirit then reappeared, and I asked, "Are you Nellie Morris?" She said "Yes," and expressed her joy at being recognised. As she withdrew, she said, "I came to help Carrie; to give her strength." My daughter had already come to me and retired.

Next day I wrote to Mrs. E. Joy Morris, simply inquiring what Nellie's real Christian name was, without saying why I wished to know. Her answer, dated July 26th, states that it was "Ella." You will find it appended to this statement, marked (D).

At a séance of Mrs. Beste, at Onset, on July 25th, Nellie Morris again came to me, giving her name. I asked, "Shall I write to your stepmother to come?" She answered, "They will not believe. I was not happy with them," and retired.

On August 1st, in the afternoon, at a materialisation séance of Miss

Gertrude Berry, at Onset, she came to me again, giving her name as "Nellie Morris." At a similar séance of Mrs. Huston in the evening of the same day she came again, giving her name as "Ella." As to her other name she said, "It is somehow gone from me. I am so glad to meet you," and retired.

Afterwards, in Boston, I attended two materialisation séances of Mrs. Fairchild, on the 22nd of August; one in the afternoon, the other in the evening. During all the time the spirit forms were emerging from the cabinet, the medium was walking round the room, and conversing with members of the circle. I was a stranger to her, and to every person present. At both of the séances Mrs. Fairchild took me up to the curtain, where stood a spirit form that had pointed to me, and who gave me her name as "Ella"; and, in the afternoon séance, on my asking her if I had ever known her in this life, she answered "No." "Why, then, do you come to me?" She answered, "I am attracted to you. I am a friend of one belonging to you."

Another fact I wish to state: Whenever a materialised form has come to me claiming to be my mother, my wife, or my daughter, I have been received with an affectionate embrace; but the spirit calling herself "Nellie Morris" or "Ella" has invariably received me as any modest maiden would in this life, simply offering me her hand.

A few days ago I addressed a letter to Mrs. E. Joy Morris, asking in what month Nellie died, and when her father died. I also stated that through a trance medium at Onset Nellie had alluded to apprehensions in regard to one member of the family, speaking of "shortness of breath," "left side," and I expressed a hope to hear that all her family were enjoying good health. Mrs. Morris's answer to this letter I append to this statement, marked (E).

I regret to have made this narrative so long, but I have thought it best to err on the safe side by not omitting any detail that seemed to have any essential bearing on the important and interesting question.

Whether the mysterious being that has been coming to me, calling herself "Nellie Morris," is really and indeed the same Nellie Morris, who died in Philadelphia in January, 1881, you must decide for yourself.

I have prepared this statement from the very full notes I made at the time of the respective occurrences above related, so that I have entire confidence in its accuracy.

You have full liberty to make any use of this communication, or of any portion of it, that you may think proper.—With high regard, I am sincerely yours,

FRANCIS J. LIPPITT.

B.

F. J. Lippitt, Esq.

Philadelphia, May 21st, 1885.

DEAR SIR,—Your favour of 18th inst. received.

1. E. Joy Morris, Esq., did have a daughter, Miss "Nellie."
2. She is dead, and died at this hotel about four years ago.
3. Miss Nellie Morris was very beautiful and very much beloved by all that knew her. She had magnificent golden hair, and light grey eyes, was

more than ordinarily tall—with much grace in appearance and manners—and would be an ornament to any circle.—Yours very respectfully,

JNO. D. WARD.

C.

Lock of hair cut for me from her head in my presence by Nellie Morris, at Mrs. Beste's séance in Washington, May 28th, 1885.

D.

Wyoming, July 26th, 1886.

Mr. Francis J. Lippitt.

DEAR SIR,—My stepdaughter's name was Ella. She was named after her mother's family name. Her mother was a Miss Ella.

I shall be very glad if you call on me when we return to the city and have a longer talk over this matter; so do not fail to come and will be pleased to hear from you.—Yours respectfully,

MRS. E. JOY MORRIS.

E.

837, 18th Broad-street, Philada, December 15th, 1887.

Mr. Francis J. Lippitt.

DEAR SIR,—I received your letter and enclosed piece of paper which you suppose is from Nellie. I also enclose a postal written by her, so you can judge for yourself. In my opinion they are not, while in general appearance they are not unlike; the letters are formed differently.

I will be very candid with you, and tell you I have no faith in these things, and I regret, indeed, I am truly sorry, that you allow your mind to dwell upon the matter. I have no doubt your lovely daughter is in Heaven, as I trust Nellie is, and that they both wait for those they loved here, and the one and only way to reach them, in my mind, is to follow after the example of that beautiful Humanity that came into this world to teach us how to live that we may gain Heaven and eternal life, and be for ever with those loved ones.

I feel interested in you and your feelings, and would like to know if you think the writing alike. Nellie was buried on January 7th, 1881. Her father died just one year after. He was buried on January 3rd, 1882. Trusting to hear from you again, or if in Philada at any time will be pleased to have you call.—Yours truly,

MRS. E. JOY MORRIS.

1700, L-street, N.W., Washington, D.C.

December 20th, 1887.

Professor A. R. Wallace.

MY DEAR SIR,—I was a witness to all that General Francis Lippitt has narrated to you as having occurred (regarding his spirit daughter and Miss Nellie Morris) in Mrs. M. E. Beste's séances in this city, and *know* that his statements are true in every particular. This I state, not because you would be likely yourself to *question* the verity of his statements, but to add strength to his testimony for those who do not know the General as you do. It was I who handed to him the scissors of which he speaks to cut the lock off of Nellie Morris's hair. The General, as well as myself, has had an immense experience in spirit manifestations, and here, where he lives, and has the confidence and respect of all as a man of culture and stern integrity, no one,

not steeped in *stupid* ignorance and prejudice, would for a single moment challenge the truth of his statements as he has given them to you.—Very sincerely yours,  
P. O. JENKINS, M.D.

Washington, D.C., *December 21st, 1887.*

Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, Godalming, England.

DEAR SIR,—My friend, General F. J. Lippitt, has shown me a letter addressed to you by himself in regard to certain appearances of two forms as spirits at séances of Mrs. M. Eugenie Beste, held in this city on the 8th, 17th, 24th, and 28th of May, 1885.

I was present at these séances, and can say that I heard most of the conversations of the spirits purporting to be Carrie Lippitt and Nellie Morris. I particularly well remember the séance at which a lock of hair was cut from the head of Nellie Morris. At this séance, P. O. Jenkins, Esq., was present, and handed the scissors for the use of the spirit in severing the lock.

I was very much interested in the effort of General Lippitt to establish the identity of Nellie Morris, of the success of which I could only judge by what was incidentally uttered by the spirits, and by the disclosures of General Lippitt himself, after May 8th, 1885.

I cannot say whether Mr. Jenkins was present at all of these séances, but he concurs with me in vouching for the truth of the incident of the cutting of the lock of hair.

Both of these gentlemen are well known in this city, and need no vouchers for their credibility where they are known. As for myself, I must refer to the record of my 24 years of service in the Treasury of the United States, and my studies of the phenomena of Spiritualism since 1845 in proof of my honest endeavour to state facts as they were.—Very respectfully,

DARIUS LYMAN.

The following letters bear on the character of some of the “mediums” mentioned in the foregoing account :—

5, Boylston-place, Boston, Mass.

*March 25th, 1888.*

MY DEAR MYERS,—1. I am writing to Bundy for information about William Beste, Keeler, Mrs. C. M. Twing, and Mrs. Huston.

2. The case of Mrs. Ross was undoubtedly one of complete exposure and clear fraud, and even if she ever got any genuine phenomena, nothing can be done with her.

4. The Berry sisters have also been recently detected in fraud, and had been previously exposed. I went one evening not very long ago to a Berry materialisation séance, and had no doubt that it was complete fraud.

5. Mrs. Fairchild has also been completely exposed. If I can get the records of these exposures I will forward them to you. R. HODGSON.

Chicago, *April 26th, 1888.*

DEAR MR. HODGSON,—You asked me about the following named persons who claim to be mediums :—(1) Mrs. M. Eugenie Beste ; (2) William and P. L. O. A. Keeler (brothers) ; (3) Helen and Gertrude Berry ; (4) Mrs. Ross ; (5) Mrs. Fairchild.

Mrs. Beste is a shrewd adventuress, with probably some psychic power. She was detected at Hartford and owned up, but is again running her fraudulent show, at present in California. The Keeler Brothers probably have some psychic power, but they are both arrant rascals. One of them fooled Alfred Russel Wallace most egregiously, I have good reason to believe. The Berry girls are probably mediumistic, but I have no confidence in their materialisation shows. They certainly are incorrigible frauds, though I would not like to say they have no power as materialising mediums, yet I have no confidence in their claims in this respect. Mrs. Ross is probably an unmitigated swindler. Ditto, Mrs Fairchild, though plenty of witnesses will swear that all of them are genuine.

Mrs. Huston is a comparatively new candidate for public credence, and I know little of her. Mrs. Carrie M. Twing is not a materialising medium, nor a medium for physical manifestations of any sort. She is a woman of good moral sense, and I think means to be honest. She has been for years the unfortunate victim of the opium habit, but I am told that within two years she has made a noble fight against it and conquered. I do not consider her mediumship anything very wonderful; but I think she is a virtuous and well-meaning woman. All the others of whom you have spoken are, so far as I know, a bad lot. I could give you, if necessary, considerable of the history in print of most of these people, but it would involve a good deal of work in hunting it up from my files, and unless it is important I had rather not undertake it.—Yours truly,

JNO. C. BUNDY.

1827, Jefferson-place, Washington.

*February 22nd, 1888.*

MY DEAR MR. WALLACE,—On the 18th inst. I received your letter of February 7th. I had just mailed to you a slip announcing the final result of the Ross persecution. A short time ago I met Dr. Flower, of Boston, who was on his way to Florida with his family. He told me that Ross's lawyer refused to jeopard his own social standing by offering evidence of the genuineness of the manifestations, and, therefore, had the indictment quashed on a purely technical ground. Dr. Flower told me also that, finding the Rosses to be in a destitute condition, stripped of all the money they had by the expenses of the legal proceedings, he promised that if he could be absolutely convinced of the genuineness of the manifestations through Mrs. Ross, by a séance at his own house, he would allow them 1,500dol. a year, in order to relieve them from dependence upon public circles for their support. They accordingly came to his house at a time appointed. Dr. Flower hung a curtain over a recess, and in the course of the séance 52 different materialised forms made their appearance, of both sexes and of all ages. One of them, a girl of about 10, talked for some time with the doctor's own daughter, of the same age, behaving and talking precisely as a bright, mortal child would have done. Afterwards Mrs. Ross came to see him in his office. He at once proposed a séance there and then, calling in his wife and his brother and brother's wife. In a short time about 36 different forms showed themselves, and the doctor informs me that he is now redeeming his pledge.

Before answering your queries, let me first assure you that no reliance can be placed on any statement in the *Religio* unfavourable to mediums for materialisation. That paper has always been the organ of those Spiritualists who deny the possibility of materialisation, and has been carrying on an unprincipled and indiscriminate warfare against all materialising mediums. I say "unprincipled" because, while never failing to copy at length all accounts of "exposures" appearing in the hostile secular papers (some of which I *personally knew* to be mere fiction), the editor has invariably refused to publish any contradiction or explanation whatever on behalf of the accused medium. In 1874, at the request of the *Banner of Light*, I repaired to Philadelphia to ascertain and report the real facts as to the alleged Katie King confession. After a two weeks' investigation, in conjunction with Colonel Olcott, I returned to Boston and wrote out my report. It was published in two parts in two successive numbers of the *Banner*. The *Religio* copied the first part entire, praising the intelligence and conscientiousness displayed in the investigation, and promising to give the other part to its readers in its next issue. But the results arrived at, and given in the second part, vindicated the Holmeses, and showed that the romantic "confession" was a pure fiction, which an illiterate woman of bad character, named Eliza White, had been bribed to sign and swear to as "Katie King." So, instead of publishing the second part, the *Religio* dismissed the subject in a few lines, stating that it was not worth publishing, and calling the writer, substantially, a silly idiot who had evidently been imposed upon.

Again, Mrs. Lita Barney Sayles, a lady of wealth and culture, told me that some years ago she was an acceptable contributor to the *Religio*. Having been completely convinced at a very remarkable séance of Mrs. Beste (held under the strictest test conditions) of the genuineness of her materialisations, she wrote an account of the séance for the *Religio*. But Colonel Bundy declined to publish it, and wrote to her, simply saying "he was sorry that she also had become one of the deluded."

As to Mrs. Ross, his persecution of her has been incessant. His paper last summer repeatedly called on the authorities at Onset to drive her from the encampment, on the ground of her being a notorious impostor and swindler.

As to Mrs. Sawyer, Mrs. Beste, Mrs. Fairchild, Mrs. Ross, and Mr. Keeler, I know not whether they have been at all times saints or sinners; but this I *do* know, that as to Mrs. Sawyer and Mrs. Fairchild, the manifestations were genuine, because there was no physical possibility of fraud; and that as to Mr. Keeler (whose séances I have attended for seven years) and Mrs. Beste (whose séances I have attended for six years), and Mrs. Ross (whose séances I have attended for three years), I know that their manifestations are genuine; because, in the first place, their séances have been under such conditions as to render fraud physically impossible; and, secondly, because I have had through them such proofs of spirit identity as to make the question whether the conditions were such as to exclude fraud a matter of no importance.

Latterly, in deference to a better-instructed public opinion, the *Religio* has begun to admit accounts of materialisation séances without comment.

As to Mrs. Beste's "seizure and confession," the wife of a newspaper

editor in Hartford, Connecticut, had repeatedly written to her, inviting her to visit Hartford and be their guest, for the purpose of giving them and their friends séances on three successive evenings. Mrs. Beste knew nothing of the lady; but as her letters were kind and friendly in tone, and expressed great interest in the phenomena, she finally accepted the invitation. She was a stranger in Hartford, and knew no one of the circle (some 15 in number) they had assembled for her. At the first two séances the usual manifestations occurred (self-luminous forms and independent voices, masculine and feminine), and were pronounced satisfactory by them all. On the third evening her hostess had, concealed in the kitchen, which opened directly on the séance-room, two stalwart men, one a blacksmith, and the other (I think) a policeman.

Mrs. Beste is short (not over 5ft. 3in.) and stout, and has a remarkably short neck (and thus entirely different from many slender and graceful spirit forms I have often seen at her séances). One of her cabinet spirits is known as "Apollonius." He is very tall: 6ft. at the very least.

The first to come out of the cabinet was Apollonius, who, after speaking as usual in his powerful masculine voice, retired, undisturbed, the roughs in the kitchen not apparently caring to tackle *him*. The next form that appeared was that of a young girl in the usual delicate white drapery. Instantly the two athletes sprang into the room, and seized the form in the roughest manner. The drapery at once disappeared, and the form held by them was evidently that of Mrs. Beste.

These particulars, according to the best of my recollection, may be gathered from the two accounts of the "exposure" published at the time, both of which I read. What follows I know only from Mrs. Beste's personal statement to some twelve of us, *habitués* of her séances in Washington. The substance of this statement was afterwards published by her in the *Banner of Light*, verified, I believe, by her oath.

All she remembered of the séance was this: That she was entranced as usual; that on being suddenly roused by some violent shock she heard someone exclaim "Bring some brandy, or whisky, quick!" that some brandy was presently forced down her throat; that they then told her she must sign her name to a writing they showed her, or else immediately be taken to gaol. It was late at night, and she knew no one in Hartford; and being only half-conscious, and terrified by the threat just made her, she signed the paper, and she may have sworn to it, though of this she had no remembrance. She dimly remembered asking at the railway station for a ticket for Philadelphia, but did not come to the full possession of her senses until the train conductor demanded her ticket for Philadelphia, where she arrived about midnight.

The confession thus extorted stated, as published, that all her spirit manifestations had been fraudulent, and that the manifestations of all the mediums in Boston were fraudulent also. It had evidently been drawn up beforehand, and the presence of the notary, who certified to her oath before him, like that of the two roughs concealed in the kitchen, was no doubt part of the programme.

One of the two accounts published of the affair was signed by the hostess (she and her husband are both Catholics), the other by one of her friends in the circle. My memory of them may not be absolutely accurate, but I re-

collect that, on one or two points, they were not consistent with each other. As to other details, I remember only that the cabinet was searched, and a bottle of phosphorised oil was stated to have been found in it, and also some of Mrs. Beste's clothing, of which she was found to be divested when seized.

My opinion on the whole matter is that it was a case of what is called transfiguration, where the medium is temporarily transfigured, while in unconscious trance, not only as to bodily form, face, and feature, but *in dress*. The effect of a sudden seizure on the medium's nervous system, rousing her more or less completely from her trance (a state on which the very existence of a materialisation seems to depend), would naturally suspend at once the invisible force causing and sustaining these changes; thus leaving the medium and her dress in their normal condition, like Cinderella when the clock struck twelve. The same invisible power could have divested her of the garment unknown to herself, or have transformed it into the spirit drapery. I have repeatedly witnessed facts of this very nature, but to narrate them would make this letter too intolerably long.

As to the alleged bottle of phosphorised oil and the phosphorescent dresses:—

Mrs. Beste's séances are held in the dark, and the forms that appear are, *as to their drapery*, self-luminous. The luminosity is not phosphorescent. There is never any odour of phosphorus, nor are there ever any of those wavy and smoky appearances attendant on phosphorescent lights shining in darkness. Accordingly the sceptics now insist that the luminosity is produced by luminous paint. Here is an experiment showing that neither phosphorous nor luminous paint has anything to do with it. At one of Mrs. Beste's séances a spirit form came to Professor Coues (I sitting next to him), who gave him her name and was recognised by him. I held my white muslin handkerchief close to her white and luminous dress; in fact, touching it. The handkerchief was visible, but absolutely black. She said, "Give it to me, and I will make it white again." I gave it to her, and after rolling it about for a moment or two in her hands, which were *not* luminous, she returned it to me as white as her dress. "And now," she said, "I will make it black again." I handed it to her, and after rolling it about for a few seconds in her hands, she returned it to me as black as before. Dr. Coues repeated the experiment, and with the same results.

It is obvious that these changes from black to white, and then from white to black again, could not have been operated by the use of phosphorus or luminous paint.

If the bottle of phosphorised oil *was* found in the cabinet I cannot believe that the hostess was guilty of having it placed there; but I *do* believe that it was brought there from without by one of those hostile, but invisible agencies whose presence, as all will testify that have had much experience of séances, is generally perceived whenever the circle is antagonistic to the medium. Mrs. Beste was staying with the hostess as her guest, and it is highly improbable that a bottle of phosphorised oil could have been kept successfully concealed from her searching inspection. And as to the concealment of the luminous costumes of tall Apollonius and of the other cabinet spirits that had appeared on the two previous evenings, when Mrs. Beste had brought no other luggage than a hand bag, *that* is obviously impossible.

What became of these costumes, especially of the luminous dress worn by Mrs. Beste when she was seized? For unless my memory entirely deceives me, no mention was made in either of the two accounts of their having been found.

Reimer's article in *Light* of February 18th, p. 77, bears directly upon this subject. Please read it.

And now, as to your other queries.

1. I cannot state that in any instance where Nellie Morris manifested her presence, either in materialised form or in writing, it was my *first* séance with the medium. As to Mrs. Twing, at Onset, I had attended one of her séances as a trance-medium, but I was a stranger to all then present, as well as to herself. As to the Fairchild séance in Boston, I had attended one of her public séances one year before, when I was only one in a crowd of people, all strangers to me. At the séance in question, as well as at the previous one, I gave no name, and all present were strangers to me. But this I can state positively, that in no case, when Nellie Morris *first* announced herself, could the medium, or any person present, have known or heard of her.

2. The editor I mentioned to you as personally hostile to Keeler was Colby, of the *Banner of Light*. I am preparing a reply to the dishonest and untruthful account given by the Seybert Commission of their séance with Keeler, and shall send you a copy of it if I can get it published. Of course, both the *Banner* and the *Religio* would refuse it.

3. I have never had any test connected with Nellie Morris through a *private* medium. In fact, I do not remember having had an opportunity to sit with one for many years.

4. I have never published an account of any séance I have attended, excepting the one at Mrs. Ross's at Onset; which appeared in *Facts* for October, 1886; a copy of which I gave you.

5. I have never heard of either my daughter or Nellie Morris having manifested their presence at any séance where I was not present.

6. As to Mr. Myers' suggestion in respect to my daughter's statement about "keeping her mother's birthday."

I married my first wife (my daughter's mother) at San Francisco in December, 1852. Early in 1853 we went for a few months to Rhode Island, my native State; and from thence to Brussels and to Paris, returning to San Francisco in 1855, on my learning that my California agent had embezzled and squandered all but a small fragment of my property, thus compelling me to resume my legal practice. Our home was for some time a very humble one, some three miles from the city. My daughter was born there in 1857. In 1859 my wife died in New Jersey of Panama fever, contracted at the Isthmus while on her way to visit her mother, whom she had not seen for several years. During all the six years of our married life (in which we never once visited Washington) there never was any "keeping of her birthday" at all, beyond my giving her such little birthday present as I could afford. After the war I brought my daughter, then seven years old, to Providence, Rhode Island, and afterwards, in 1865, married my present wife, who never saw my daughter's mother, who has been very seldom alluded to in my present family. This much is certain, that neither my wife

nor her children, when the writing through Mrs. Sawyer was given, knew what was my first wife's birthday, nor any other living person beside myself, except her old mother, then living in her home in New Jersey; and who died there a year ago.

On reading the communication from my daughter through Mrs. Sawyer, I saw at once that it was not in her handwriting, and that it was evidently written by some other spirit to whom she had given the *substance* of what she wished to say.

I enclose herewith the original message from my first wife received at Keeler's séance of February 25th, 1887, begging that you will return it to me with the other original writings when no longer wanted.—Yours, with great regard,

FRANCIS J. LIPPITT.

1827, Jefferson-place, Washington, D.C.

Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace.

*December 15th, 1887.*

MY DEAR MR. WALLACE,—In April, 1884, Mrs. Sawyer, a materialising medium, came to Washington to hold séances. I had never heard of her before, and I was an entire stranger to her. I attended a séance of hers, held April 11th, 1884. The cabinet was in one corner of the room; and during the entire séance there was sufficient light to distinguish every person present, and to make it impossible for any confederate to enter the cabinet without being seen by all. One of the forms that appeared at the opening of the curtain was that of a young girl, in white drapery, and whose face was veiled. In height and general appearance she resembled my departed daughter, Carrie, who had died in New Jersey in July, 1882. I approached her and asked her name. She made no answer, and after a few moments she retired behind the curtain. Presently she reappeared, stepped forward to a little table, took from it a sheet of paper and a pencil, and retired with them behind the curtain. In a few moments she reappeared again, handed a piece of paper to a Mr. Burke, who was conducting the séance, and by signs directed him to hand it to me. He did so. It is the paper marked (A) which accompanies this letter.

I have now to state that my first wife (whose name was Elizabeth) was born in the County of Durham, in the North of England, on the 25th of February, 1836, and died in New Jersey in 1859; that no one of my present family had any knowledge of her birthday; that, besides myself, there was only one living person that knew it; and this was her mother (now deceased), then living at a small country place behind the mountains in the State of New Jersey, where she had been residing over 30 years; and that afterwards I ascertained from herself that she had never seen or heard of Mrs. Sawyer.

The members of the circle were all strangers to me except Judge Cuppz, now deceased, and my stepson, Mr. Pickering Dodge, who will certify to the correctness of this statement. I know not where the other witnesses can be found.—Very sincerely yours,

FRANCIS J. LIPPITT.

Washington, D.C., *December 15th, 1887.*

I am not, and never have been, a believer in what are called "spirit manifestations"; but I have no objection to stating that I was present at

the séance of Mrs. Sawyer, held April 11th, 1884; that I have read the account of it contained in the foregoing letter to Mr. Wallace, and that the same is strictly correct in every particular; also, that I recognise the paper marked (A) attached to said letter as the identical paper mentioned in said letter, and which was seen and read by me at the close of the séance.

PICKERING DODGE.

A.

DEAR PA,—I am here to see you, and am glad to see you looking so well. I am ever so gleefully disposed upon looking into that noble, dear countenance of yours. I am happy with mother Elizabeth, and we here celebrate her birthday (February 25th) much after the manner we did on earth.

CARRIE.

Washington, D.C., *February 23rd, 1888.*

Dr. Alfred R. Wallace, Godalming, England.

DEAR SIR,—General Lippitt has requested of me for such use as you may choose to make of it, an account of a séance of Mrs. M. E. Beste, at which I was present. With this letter I deliver him the statement desired.

Some members of the Society for Psychical Research in England, I understand, object as evidence to any recital of the occurrences at séances where she has acted as medium, on the ground of her exposure at Hartford, Connecticut, in 1885. My rule is to let every séance stand upon its own merits. If through one medium I get manifestations unmistakably genuine, and at a second séance with the same medium get absolute proofs of fraud, and at a third again get genuine manifestations, I do not propose to reject the genuine phenomena on account of their unfortunate companionship with deceptions. If one does so, he can never settle the question as to the real character of the unseen influences acting upon a medium. If certain controlling spirits are not too good to lie, they may instigate to fraudulent manifestations and co-operate in the fraud. One powerful medium on our Pacific coast is a wonderful subject for both sorts of influences. The sitters with her get deceptions or otherwise, according to the moods they bring to the séances.

I have nothing to say about the Hartford matter in Mrs. Beste's case. The appearance of the form of Washington is for me a genuine manifestation of supersensual origin.—Very truly yours,

D. LYMAN.

#### FORM-APPEARANCE OF GEORGE WASHINGTON.

On Saturday, the 12th of August, 1882, I was present with C. C. Sailer and wife at a séance given by Mrs. M. Eugenie Beste, at their residence, No. 3129, N.-street in Georgetown (now West Washington), D.C. This was one of very many private séances, which were held by Mr. Sailer, his wife, and myself as the only spectators, with the same medium. The series of sittings beginning that year, but held at irregular intervals, extended into the spring of 1885.

The day on which this particular séance was held was very hot and sultry, and towards evening a fog came on which rendered the heat doubly oppressive. Mrs. Beste came from Washington to Mr. Sailer's between six and eight o'clock p.m. Ascending the high steps that approach the house from the street, she sat down upon the doorstep, remaining there for some time

for such refreshment as an open doorway could give. She was clad in a thin blue lawn dress. As the hour of eight drew near and it became possible to close doors and windows without discomfort, we all went into the parlour, a room of two apartments connected by folding doors. In the north apartment, standing against the north wall, Mr. Sailer had erected a movable cabinet, the frame of which was covered with a dark maroon cloth on the four sides. On the front, or south side, the cloth was so disposed that it might be pulled aside from the west, or opened from the middle by pulling the curtains either way, so as to disclose the entire interior. A single chair was the only article of furniture within. The cabinet was almost a fixture in the room for many months. This apartment contained a piano (on the east side), with chairs. On the west side was a fireplace and mantel-shelf.

Upon entering this apartment, Mrs. Beate for a few moments sat upon the piano stool, and upon her apparent entrancement went within the cabinet and took her seat there. We at once occupied three seats about six feet in front. A single gas-jet was lighted, and the light was reduced, but not so low that the colours and shapes of all the articles in the room were not easily discernible. Our custom generally was, if forms did not at once appear, to sing some hymn or well-known popular song. Soon after taking our seats I remarked to Mr. Sailer that the hot, foggy evening was against us, and that it was probable that there would be no great manifestations. But a few moments after I made this remark the curtain was lifted, and the tall form of a soldier emerged from the cabinet. His first words were, "The father of his country." He was dressed in a blue coat with belt and epaulettes attached, in yellow breeches, and long boots. The head was bare and the hair grey. The form reached to the top of the cabinet (six feet in height). The figure in appearance accurately reproduced in form and colour the details of the figure represented by Trumbull's picture of Washington resigning his commission, to be seen in the Rotunda of the Capitol. The figure came out seven times from the cabinet, bringing once a female upon his right arm, swathed in clouds of muslin from head to foot. More than once he lifted the curtain on the right of the cabinet and disclosed the medium sitting in her blue lawn dress in the chair. At each coming he would speak a few words, and upon his voice failing he would step within the cabinet, recover strength, come out and complete the sentence. In this way he succeeded in uttering a message destined for a gentleman in Philadelphia, in which he declared that he had appeared once before through another medium known in that city.

It is not my purpose to affirm or deny that the intelligence animating this figure was the soul known on earth as Washington; but simply to assert that if its pretensions were not true, it was due to no conscious agency on the part of the medium. Madame Tussaud herself could not have produced a better image of Washington with all the appliances of her art at command. And certainly with all the materials for dressing a Washington at hand within the cabinet, the medium, aided by all the sitters, could not with the labour of many hours have produced a form of Washington which any observer would not at once have pronounced a lay figure. But there was neither material within reach of the medium for such a production, nor time sufficient for it. We, the sitters, could but recognise it as the creation, not of supernatural, but of super-human capacities. Moreover, we did not pursue our investigations under conditions where trickery could produce exhibitions like this. Of other details of this séance, it is needless to speak.

D. LYMAN.