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SOME ACCOUNT  
OF  
THE VAMPIRES OF ONSET,  
PAST AND PRESENT.

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BOSTON:  
PRESS OF S. WOODBERRY & CO.,  
105 SUMMER STREET.  
1892.





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## PREFATORY.

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THE compiler of this little pamphlet is not an opponent of spiritualism ; on the contrary, he has for many years been interested in the study of psychical phenomena. He is proud to say that he counts among his steadfast friends many well-known spiritualists, and has their approval of this work. He fully believes all rational, law-abiding men and women among spiritualists and sympathetic investigators will indorse all efforts to show up the records of some of the vile creatures who, under the mask of mediumship, have been coining money from the most sacred feelings of the human heart ; who, with diabolical cunning and all the artifices of the mountebank and prostitute, have plied their wiles to victimize and demoralize heart-broken mourners seeking knowledge of their beloved dead. The claim sometimes made, that these vendors of spurious wares, these destroyers of manhood and womanhood, and wreckers of virtue, have mediumistic power, may well seem absurd to ordinary common sense, and those who admit the claim should regard them as all the more dangerous on that account. That such vermin are permitted among people claiming to be civilized and respectable, is a matter of profound astonishment to a large number of spiritualists, and to the world at large ; but that these pests should be publicly recognized and treated with consideration and courtesy due only to decent people, and this by officers of the Onset Camp and leading representatives of the spiritualists in Boston and elsewhere, is a matter for serious alarm and energetic protest. If this brief but authentic compilation shall assist in awakening virtuous spiritualists to the deplorable state of affairs at Onset and elsewhere, so inimical to public morals and proper study of psychical phenomena, the purpose of its publication will have been accomplished.

BOSTON, July 1, 1892.

## MRS. HANNAH V. ROSS.

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THE *Providence Journal* of March 1, 1884, contains an extended sketch of Mrs. Ross. The headlines will give an idea of the biography; they are as follows: "A great show exposed." "The bogus materializations of Mrs. Hannah V. Ross." "A domestic quarrel leads to unpleasant developments." "The police being summoned, mother and daughter denounce each other as public frauds." The account explains the several methods by which confederates were introduced into the cabinet, and details the writer's interview with Mrs. Ross's mother-in-law, Mrs. Daniel V. Ross, who is spoken of as "a very respectable woman." After telling the interviewer that she had been a spiritualist for over thirty years, and claiming that for years the secret of her daughter-in-law's deception was kept from her, she is reported as saying: "It so happened that one night this winter, one of the confederates failed to appear, and Hannah asked me to assist her in the cabinet. I was never more surprised in my life, and I indignantly refused to play upon the feelings of any one." The account continues:

"Mrs. Ross, Sr., also informed the writer that Hannah 'fooled' her husband for two years after she married him, and that when he learned of the deception he was greatly exercised in mind, and informed her (his mother) of it. Hannah had also boasted to one of Ross's relatives that "if she could eat, drink, and sleep with Charles (her husband), and fool him, she could fool anybody."

Then follows an account of a domestic row between Charles and Hannah, in which she seems to have got the best of the fight. "She attacked him," it is alleged, "and tore his clothes, scratched his face, and closed and blackened one of his eyes." After this fight, Mrs. Hannah bundled up some clothes and went off with her milkman. Returning, some weeks later, she found her husband gone and that she had no home. "On learning the condition of affairs," continues the *Journal* account, "she was like an infuriated tigress let loose. She attacked Mrs. Ross, Sr., it is alleged, knocked her down, blackened her eyes, and bruised her face and body." Details of broken china, hot water, etc., followed, but need not be repeated. The affair culminated in police interference. In the presence of the policeman, criminations and recriminations were thrown about freely, Mrs. Ross, Sr., saying, "You are a fraud, and earned the money by deceiving the public." "I know I did," retorted the wonderful materializing medium; "but didn't you and your son help me to do it? You are just as much in the mud as I am in the mire." Mrs. Ross, Sr., denied that she had any hand in the "base deception," as she termed it.

This is enough to show the character of Mrs. Hannah V. Ross, but it may be well enough to say that she was detected at Lake Pleasant Camp in 1883, on account of which Mr. Thomas S. Tice was published in the *Providence Journal* subsequent to the appearance of the biographical sketch hereinbefore mentioned. We have no desire to parade the dark side of human nature in the *Journal*, but we were recreant to our duty did we not put this matter before the public at the present time.



## AN ACCOUNT OF HER FIRST EXPOSURE IN BOSTON.

The plan was as follows: It was agreed that when the Indian should make his appearance, some one man, who had previously been selected, should seize him, another should occupy himself with Mr. Ross, a third with Mrs. Ross, a fourth should light the gas, and the others put in the best possible work. If the Indian did not appear, then the chimes of the little French clock on the mantel striking nine should be the signal. Mr. C. A. Braman provided himself with a box of lucifer matches, so that a bright light could be obtained at short notice. Thus prepared, the party assembled in the front parlor of 96 West Concord Street, last Monday evening, and the gentlemen state that everything started off as usual. The cabinet was examined; Mr. Ross made his little speech; the lights were extinguished, save a small lantern situated in the opposite corner of the room from the cabinet; the doors leading to the back parlor were closed, and the performance began. The curtains were drawn aside, and a shadowy form revealed for an instant. Soon the manifestations remained longer, and finally began to move around the room. For some reason the Indian did not appear, and the fatal hour of nine was approaching without any action having been taken by the company. At last a "spirit," who claimed to be a friend of Mr. McLauchlan, called him to the cabinet. Mr. McLauchlan said at a venture, "Is that you, Harry"? The "spirit" nodded an assent. "My dear friend," continued Mr. McLauchlan, putting out his hand, which the "spirit" took, "I am very glad to see you." Mr. McLauchlan tightened his grip on the "spirit's" hand. "Come out here," he said; and then, in a quick, sharp voice, he cried, "Come on, boys, I've got something!"

The party responded to a man. Mr. Braman's matches flashed into flame, and in an instant the room was as light as day. The "spirit Harry" found himself in the middle of the floor, with the ghostly muslin stripped from his face; Mrs. Ross was securely held, while the stalwart Mr. Willard caught the gentle Mr. Ross in his arms just as that gentleman pulled his revolver. But the most singular part of the affair was yet to come. Young Mr. Braman, who is a finely-built, muscular fellow, sprang to one side of the cabinet, and as he lifted the curtain, he saw his "big Injun" with an uplifted chair, prepared to brain the first person who entered. Under a blow like a flash of lightning, which landed on poor Lo's jaw, the now thoroughly materialized "spirit" fell to the floor.

While the battle in the cabinet was progressing there was a general melee going on in the parlor. Poor Mr. Ross was struggling in the embrace of brawny Mr. Willard, begging to be released, and acknowledging that the game was up. The "spirit Harry" broke away from his tormentor, and succeeded in making his way up stairs.

There were taken from the cabinet three boys, or young men, and a poor little trembling girl not over eight years old. She was completely terror-stricken, and clung to the dress of Mrs. Ross, crying bitterly. The "staff" of Mr. and Mrs. Ross turned out to be three boys and the little girl. The "big Injun" proved to be a young man twenty or more years old. Mr. Ross did not attempt any explanation, but refunded the money paid by each one of the audience present, and the company departed, well satisfied with the night's work.

## N. W. GILBERT'S STATEMENT.

WINTER PARK, Fla., Feb. 25, 1887.

On the evening of January 31, of the present winter, I was one of a party of about twenty ladies and gentlemen to attend a "materializing seance" at the house of Mrs. H. V. Ross, at 96 West Concord Street, Boston. The "manifestations" were such as are usually seen at such places. Several "forms" came out of the "cabinet," or appeared at the apertures in the curtain, and claimed, by nodding assent when questioned, to be the spirits of deceased relatives of some person or persons present.

Shortly after nine o'clock, one of the young men of our party seized a pretended spirit which stood behind the curtain, and pulled it suddenly out into the room. At the same instant, by preconcerted action, we lighted the chandelier and pulled away the curtains forming the "cabinet," and found therein two other young men, and a little girl apparently about eight years old. The three boys—the two in the cabinet and the one just taken out—were about fourteen, eighteen, and twenty-two respectively; of course, judging by their looks and appearances. These we captured and held, and talked to and heard them talk, their silent nods having been exchanged for good Saxon speech, whereby they begged piteously to be let go. We also held in custody for the time being Mr. and Mrs. Ross; and I distinctly and also repeatedly heard Mr. Ross say to the man who held him, words to this effect: "You have exposed us; what more do you want? Why can't you let us alone now?" He then offered to pay back our admission fee, which he did, and promised that the next day he would refund all we had ever paid him, saying that he had no more money in the house at that time.

N. W. GILBERT,  
415 Washington Street.

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STATE OF FLORIDA,  
ORANGE, SS.

February 25, 1887.

The above-named N. W. Gilbert personally appeared this day and made oath that the above statements by him subscribed are true.

Before me,

JAMES S. CAPEN,  
*Notary Public.*

NOTE.—Seven other statements under oath, substantially the same as Dr. Gilbert's, were published in the *Morning Post*.

## SECOND EXPOSURE OF MRS. ROSS IN BOSTON.

The following account is from the *Boston Post*: Some six or eight gentlemen, some of them prominent spiritualists, attended the seance yesterday afternoon, at the house No. 96 West Concord Street. In the party were Lieut. Walker and Officer James G. Arbecam, of police headquarters, in citizen's clothes. They carried in their inside pocket a warrant for the arrest of Mr. and Mrs. Ross on charge of obtaining money under false pretences. Also among the number was a representative of the *Post*, who was probably the first reporter who had ever crossed the threshold since the premises had been occupied by the Ross family.

The mediums evidently had no suspicions that anything unusual was about to happen, for though the members of the party arrived at different times, no opposition was made to their entrance. Mr. Ross, who is a tall man with thin hair, a heavy brown mustache, and a keen eye, as usual, acted as master of ceremonies. The interior of the room has already been described in these columns.

Presently the silence was broken by the squeaking parlor organ, which sounded "Nearer, my God, to Thee," and a number of the expectant watchers took up the strain. After the music had gone on for two or three minutes, the curtain of the cabinet slowly parted, and a figure robed in spotless white slowly emerged and began a sort of nondescript dance, which was kept up for a minute, and then disappeared behind the curtain. The sepulchral music kept on, and presently the snowy figure again appeared and went through a weird sort of motion, in which it moved its arms, which, in the faint light, looked very plump for the arms of a spirit without flesh and blood. Again the figure glided noiselessly behind the shielding folds of the curtain, and again it came forth and went through the same motion. It paused a moment and beckoned to some one in the circle. Mr. Ross approached one gentleman and said, "I think she wants to speak to you." The man arose and went to the figure, who whispered something to him that was inaudible to the spectators. The gentleman returned to his seat with a long-drawn sigh, evidently not satisfied with the revelations made to him. Again the spirit disappeared. The organ changed its tune, and in a moment a male "spirit," dressed in black clothes, came forth. It did not remain long, but quickly returned to its hiding-place. Presently a good-sized Indian glided into the presence of the pale faces. It was doubtless "Bright Star"; but he was soon called back, and didn't appear again.

Presently two female figures, clothed in the regulation white, stepped forth; one of them was that of a young girl, apparently fourteen or fifteen years old. One of the gentlemen was called for and approached the smaller figure, and, after a critical examination, returned to his seat, saying, "It is my daughter." When one of the female spirits again came out, Mr. Ross beckoned to the reporter, and said, "She wants you"; but on a near approach, Mr. Ross concluded that the spirit was mistaken; but not until the reporter had touched her arm, and found that it was plump and warm. The next materialization was a woman and two little children, all in white. A gentleman present was called for, and approached. He kissed them, and the kiss sounded like a real old-fashioned, fleshly smack.

The next and last manifestation was the fatal one. A gentleman who was



one of the party of investigators was talking with the fourteen-year-old spirit, when he suddenly seized her in his arms and carried her bodily across the room. Mr. Ross, who was on the alert, made a spring at the man; but, although he was quick, he was not as rapid as Lieut. Walker and his assistant, Officer Arbecam. The limbs of the law and the man medium met in the middle of the room, and in an instant the place was transformed from a darkened abode of spirits to a scene of wildest confusion. The others in the party took a hand; some securing Mrs. Ross, who was in the cabinet, while one or two turned their attention to a large individual named Dr. C. H. Ayer, who began to be demonstrative. The shutters were thrown open and daylight admitted. The appearance of the room was almost indescribable. Chairs were overturned, women were screaming in wild alarm, while the struggles of Mr. and Mrs. Ross were terrific. Mr. Ross fought like a tiger for his liberty, shrieking in his rage, and vowing all sorts of vengeance on his captors. The sight of the badges of the officers and the exhibition of the warrant acted in much the same way as a bucket of water would on a wax taper. Dr. Ayer was not quieted until the twisters had been put on him by the police.

But the worst struggle of all was with Mrs. Ross, for she is a powerful woman, weighing nearly two hundred pounds. When found in the cabinet she was quite scantily clothed, having disrobed to assume male attire for the next manifestation. Her clothing was found on the floor of the cabinet, where she had just taken it off. In her scanty habiliments she made a fierce fight for freedom. She seemed to have the prowess of an Amazon, and finally broke from her captors and ran down cellar, where she was found and brought back by the officers. Finally, when thoroughly exhausted, she consented to go to her room, where, under guard, she dressed herself. The child dressed surrounded by several ladies who were among the spectators. The child positively refused to give any information concerning herself. She was taken to Station 5, but was afterwards released. A search of the premises was made, but no more forms were found, although it is believed that two persons made their escape. Mr. and Mrs. Ross were taken to police headquarters, where they gave bail in three hundred dollars each for their appearance this morning, and the discomfited pair were released. During the fight in the parlor, the organist,\* Longley, and a man named Dr. Pratt, who was active in seating the visitors, made their escape.

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[FROM THE BOSTON HERALD.]

The result of the expose was most conclusive, for not only was she caught in the act of impersonating a spirit, but the child as well. Instead of dematerializing, as well-behaved spirits should, both turned out to be decidedly human—one being almost insane with rage, and the other in an equally demoralized condition through fear.

At the trial of Mr. and Mrs. Ross, Judge Parmenter, in his charge, said: "But here, nevertheless, is a fraud, practised on persons who have full faith in spiritual phenomena. It seems to me that it is far beyond the deceptions ordinarily practised, as, for instance, that of three-card monte. In such cases the

\* C. P. Longley, the composer of "beautiful songs" for seances, and confederate of the Rosses, also a popular performer in other materializing circles, notably Mrs. Hatch, attached to Ayer's Temple, but since confessed her fraud.

cupidity of the dupe is excited, or else he hopes to show superior skill to the trickster ; but here the finer sensibilities of the deceived are worked upon, and I can conceive of no greater disappointment or humiliation than to have such sacred confidence unduly violated. It is certainly a cruel thing to revive their grief wantonly, and if there is no weapon in the armory of the law to reach a fraud of this kind, it is sincerely to be deprecated. I therefore propose to investigate the matter thoroughly, and to do so I shall be unable to render a decision until Friday of next week, until which time the case stands adjourned. The defendants were held in the same bail."

WILLIAMSBURG, May 15, 1887.

MR. C. A. BRAMAN :

Sir, — I avail myself of the first opportunity to write you the little I know in regard to the "Ross expose."

I was at my friend W. W. Currier's on the second of May, I believe, Monday evening, I think (may have been Tuesday, can tell by referring to my diary), when by request and invitation Mrs. Griffin came over to Bradford, to Mr. C.'s residence, from Haverhill, and told us the story of the expose. She is the lady who said, "For pity's sake, let me take Mrs. Ross and dress her ; she is a woman, no matter what she has done." She said she took two coats and put around Mrs. Ross, and took her up stairs, after Mrs. Ross had run part way down the basement stairs and been brought back by the men. That when she was first dragged from the cabinet she had on soiled stockings, drawers, and chemise, and that this last article, in the scuffle, was torn or taken off in some way ; that Mrs. Ross talked most frightful language and used very vile terms.

She helped Mrs. Ross dress, and also learned what she could. Mrs. Ross remarked that this was the work of another materializing medium that had vowed to put her down, etc. I will not say positively, but I believe she accused Mrs. Fay of being said medium. Mrs. Ross was very much excited at first, but grew calm. Mrs. Griffin asked her if she had anything that she could help her about, and after some parley, Mrs. Ross said, "Yes, I have something they must not get hold of. I have a package I was going to take to Providence, R. I., with me. It is in this closet, on shelf, I think she added.\* Just as they were taking out the mysterious parcel one of the police came to the door. They threw it back into the closet, and, after satisfying himself that all was well, he went out. Then Mrs. G. took the package, and, by Mrs. R.'s directions, tied it on to her body as a bustle. Before Mrs. G. put said parcel on, the police, or some one, again came up, and Mrs. G. was obliged to hold the parcel between her knees for some little time ; then, as I said above, tied it on her person. The officers then took Mrs. R. away, and were going to take the little girl, who had been down stairs, half-dressed as she was caught, crying and trembling all this time.

Again Mrs. G. interceded and got permission to dress the child. As soon as they were alone, the child straightened up, and said, with some bad words, "I ain't half so scared as they think I be." Mrs. G. questioned the girl, but she was shy, although she said "there were a number that helped Mrs. R.," and "they were almost done that day, and in a few minutes Mrs. R. would have been dressed all right." Mrs. G. asked, "Does not Mrs. R. get some *true* materializations?" "Yes," said the girl, "once in a while, but that ain't so easy."

About this time a lady came to the house, was admitted at last, claimed to be Mrs. R.'s dressmaker, was told Mrs. R. was under arrest ; looked surprised, said there was, perhaps, a little girl there ; she would know of the dressmaking, etc. ; would like to see her ; Mrs. G. and dressmaker go up to the room where the girl is ; the dressmaker gives the girl a peculiar look ; the girl tells Mrs. G. no more ; Mrs. G. begins to talk to the dressmaker ; gets

\* This was the well-known "wire form," that could be extended, and in the dim light of a seance room, look like a spirit, and worn as a bustle by the medium on entering her cabinet.



into her good graces all she can, then they go down to the basement and ask a son of the Rosses if there is anything to be disposed of; he said, "Yes, but we cannot burn them, they will smell so"; then Mrs. G. said, "Well, let us get the things, and see what there is, and what we *can* do." Ross boy.—Are you up to this business? Mrs. G.—Well, I guess I am. The boy goes and opens a door near the stairs, across from the circle-room, if I understand it correctly, and brings out a lot of old lace, tarletan, cotton cloth, night-gowns, etc., and an Indian costume, which in part consisted of turkey feathers and an old table spread. Mrs. G. says, "What shall we do?" Ross boy said, "We cannot burn them, they will smell so." Mrs. G.—Go, get a washtub, put in water, and the small pieces at the bottom, the night-gowns on top." He did so. Then, "What is to be done with this Indian costume?" The dressmaker says, "Fix it for a bustle, and I will put it on." They did so. It made her dress several inches too short in the back. Mrs. G. felt ashamed to be seen with the woman and bustle on the street, but could not yet leave her. A young man met them with a strange remark (I will not repeat it, as I cannot recollect it fully); also a young lady gave them a hint that they were watched, or words to that effect. At last Mrs. G. got away, went to the Boston & Maine depot, and home to Haverhill that night. She told her husband the story, and opened the package she had worn home.

The next time she related it and showed the package was at W. W. Currier's, in the presence of Mr. Currier and wife and myself. We all examined it carefully together, in their house. What the package contained as it was undone by Mr. Currier we discovered to be a piece of white cotton cloth, pinned up, and around it a black rubber tape, about half an inch wide, with strings to tie it to the body as a bustle; also, I believe, undoing the cloth, inside was a form made of coarse footing or crown-lining lace, with white covered wires once in about six inches, like a hoop-skirt, only the wires were such as milliners use. There was a head, and on it was one of the thinnest masks, with false hair, etc. A loose piece of cheese-cloth which you can throw out on the floor, then bring the rest after as a form that materializes and dematerializes right in your sight. It is all very simple. Mrs. G. took it home after we had performed experiments with it.

Now I wish you to either go to Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Currier, or write and get their statements of this matter; also ask them to take you to Mrs. G., and I almost know she will tell you much more than I can or have. I have been as careful as possible, but, writing wholly from memory, in my case, is hard work, I have so many things to think of and attend to. This is, however, to the best of my memory, a true statement of what Mrs. G. told us.

Yours for the truth,

JENNIE B. HAGAN.

P. S.—I wrote Mrs. Griffin, and asked her to send you the address of the mask and form maker. You will see or hear from her very soon.

J. B. H.

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[FROM ALCYONE.]

### MRS. ROSS AND HER RUBBER BABY.

#### DETAILED ACCOUNT OF THE FRAUD RECENTLY ATTEMPTED ON THE SPIRITUALISTS.

On learning that much more might be known of the Boston woman exposed by the *Argus* last week, your correspondent sought the lady at whose house the seance was to have been held, and found that, though she was a business and test medium herself, she had but little faith in materializations, and was perfectly willing to state what she knew about the Boston woman, Mrs. Ross by name. Her statement, in substance, corroborated by her husband, was, that she was requested by the spiritualists in charge, to allow the use of her

parlors one Friday night for a seance, to which she consented. Some time during the day Mrs. Ross came to the house, and immediately commenced to investigate the premises, making such changes as she thought necessary. She also produced a paper from her bosom, containing the names of those who were to be admitted to the seance, and wished the lady to inspect it and vouch for the list. Mrs. Whitney asked her what difference who came, if the thing was honest; to which she replied, with a laugh, that she "wanted to be sure that none got in but those who were fools enough to expect to see spirits."

The medium was accompanied by an accomplice, who coolly informed Mrs. W. that she should expect to remain *incog.* while at her house, and she further informed her that she should require the use of Mr. Whitney's wardrobe for the seance, as she expected to personate a male spirit during the evening. Mrs. W. stated that her suspicions had been growing from the first, but now she was fully satisfied, and she determined to send at once for the parties who were backing the show, and make them acquainted with the true character of the woman and her accomplice. On mature deliberation she concluded to appear to enter into her schemes, for the purpose of being able to more fully expose her. The Boston woman being thrown off her guard, Mrs. W. was treated to a revelation of duplicity and depravity that almost took her breath away; as she expressed it, it fairly made her dizzy and sick until she got her out of the house. "Why, of course the whole thing is a fake," said the medium; she didn't suppose there were many in Portland simple enough to suppose anything else. Why, I can teach you the whole thing in four hours, so you can do it as well as I can. Half the people in the world live by swindling the other half."

She then regaled her hostess by showing her the contents of her pack, which consisted of flimsy dresses, while she was also prepared to transport her victims by the apparition of baby spirits, which she did by inflating to different degrees of obesity a "rubber dummy," to which an elastic cord was attached, which enabled her to scoot it to any part of the room she wished, and have it return.

Mrs. Whitney was further advised by this woman of a particularly popular feature of these "materializations," which was nothing less than the charming facilities offered for ladies to bring their "favorite gentlemen," as the room had to be darkened much of the time for spirits. It was equal to going through a tunnel. Besides, when these "favorite gentlemen" had become thoroughly *en-rapported* with their female attendants, they were never disposed to grab at the dummies or other paraphernalia of the medium. Mrs. W. informed her that she had no intention of making an accommodation house of her home; but the medium only laughed at such squeamishness, and said, "Portland folks are too goody-goody for anything, but you ought to see the way we do things up in Boston," or something to that effect.

Mrs. W. had by this time become fully satisfied as to the character of her guest, and, though it was nearly time for the seance to commence, a messenger was dispatched post haste for the gentleman who maintains a general oversight of these spiritual seances, and he was made aware of the state of affairs, and his presence requested immediately at the house. He came in haste, and after a hurried consultation (for the audience had already arrived), Mrs. W. decided that no seance could be given by the woman at her house, and, further, that the woman and her accomplice must leave the house at once.



Here was another surprise for the faithful, who were already out in force. They were not aware that the woman had an accomplice. The woman had especially enjoined upon Mrs. W. that no one was to know that any stranger was in the house. By this happy device the medium could sit in full view of the audience the entire evening, while the confederate operated from another room, where the muslin and gauze dresses, men's suits, rubber dummy, and flim-flams were arranged previous to the seance, so as to be all ready to jump into and out of during the great transformation acts, where spirits, all the way from the tender babe of six months to the old sinner of ninety, were to be made to pass in kaleidoscopic succession, each to be recognized in turn by some one of the audience. But the outcome was that the two worthies were turned out of the house, bag and baggage, and no spirits walked that night.\*

Mr. Wetherbee, a correspondent of *Alcyone*, writes as follows: "Mrs. Ross, good lady, honest and no taint of fraud in her manifestations."

"The children on the occasion of which I am speaking constituted a very interesting feature, one or two of them being babies in adult arms. They were kissed and handled by me, and they were living flesh and blood." This statement of Mr. Wetherbee as to what he did is strictly correct, for the writer was present at the time referred to, and not only saw but heard the osculations.

But what of the baby? It will scarcely be credited that this medium had the audacity, well knowing the credulity of her adherents, to stand in her dark cabinet and present, by the aid of an old night gown thrown over her arms, her bare maternal bosom as the face and head of a materialized baby, nature having endowed her in this direction in almost mammoth proportions.

Not only Mr. Wetherbee, but scores of other phenomena hunters followed his example, month after month, until the secret came out, when there were no more spirit babies in the Ross cabinet, and that lady forthwith relegated her bosom to nature's proper sphere, thus exploding one of the most ingenious frauds ever perpetrated.

\* Mr. and Mrs. Whitney sent this account of Mrs. Ross, under their own names, to the *Banner of Light* for publication, which was refused. The compiler therefore uses their names, instead of "Blank," as in the original.

[FROM BOSTON HERALD.]

## A MATERIALIZING SPIRIT MEDIUM EXPOSED.

STRIPPED OF ALL HER POOR DISGUISES AND PROVEN A CHEAT AND SWINDLER. MRS. AMANDA M. COWAN ENDORSED BY SPIRITUALISTS GETS INTO A RUSHING BUSINESS.

In spite of the warnings of the past, and eager to clutch the dollars of too willing dupes, Mrs. Amanda M. Cowan fitted up a suite at 219A Tremont street, and advertised herself as a materializing medium. She claimed to have been developed by George T. Albro, who was manager of the Berry sisters, and attained considerable notoriety in this line of business. The following advertisement recently appeared in the *Banner of Light*:

GEORGE T. ALBRO.

Private sittings for the development of mediumship. The following mediums, who are at present in the field, doing good work, were developed under his care:

HELEN C. BERRY,

E. GERTRUDE BERRY,

AMANDA M. COWAN,

MR. E. T. JOHNSON.

Will also attend Developing Circles in or out of Boston. For terms apply at No. 55 Rutland street, Boston, Mass.

The development of women, in the parlance of this class of people, means their sitting in a dark cabinet or closet with the male developer, and numerous charges of attempted immorality have been made by respectable women who, up to that time, had had implicit faith in the genuineness of the mediums. Such being the general method of development practised in this line of business, it is interesting to note that Mrs. Cowan points with evident pride to her having graduated at Mr. Albro's academy. She began operations in a house on Shawmut avenue, near Dover street, about two years ago, and seems to have been held in high esteem in materializing circles. In fact, so enthusiastic did her friends and admirers become, that they joined in tending her a testimonial in the shape of a surprise party and a purse of money, the spokesman on that occasion having been John William Fletcher, the hero of the famous Hart-Davies exploits in England. This case rivals the Diss Debar conspiracy in New York, and revealed a most sensational plot, of which the courts of England took such cognizance that Fletcher and his wife were indicted in the Bow street police court for obtaining valuable laces and other property with intent to defraud. Mrs. Fletcher was found guilty, and sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment at hard labor. Mr. Fletcher does not care to visit England at present, as there is an indictment pending against him, but he has no hesitation in posing before the Boston public as a great and good man, the champion of materializing mediums. He is to lecture, by the way, in the Spiritual Temple on Newbury street next Sunday afternoon, on the subject of "Materialization."

On the occasion of Mrs. Cowan's testimonial, which occurred about the first of the year, after referring to the happiness and satisfaction derived from attendance upon her seances, and to the high esteem in which Mrs. Cowan was held, the following resolutions were offered, which are herewith given in

full, as illustrating the stupendous effrontery with which these professional developing mediums carry on their system of deceit and delusion:

WHEREAS, having been privileged with exceptionally fine opportunities, through the mediumship of Mrs. Amanda M. Cowan, of becoming assured beyond all question that those who have experienced the event termed "death" can, under suitable conditions, render themselves visible to their friends on earth, and converse with them; and recognizing an earnest desire on the part of Mrs. Cowan and her spirit guides to furnish all available means to investigators for obtaining evidence of the truth of the phenomenon known as full-form materialization; therefore, be it

*Resolved*, that we tender to Mrs. Cowan our sincere thanks for the opportunities she has afforded us, and continues to afford us, for interviews with our angel friends, and freely and fully commend her seances to the attention and patronage of all who long

" — for the touch of a vanished hand,  
And the sound of a voice that is still,"

thereby to receive palpable proof that death does not end all.

*Resolved*, that for their endeavors to eliminate from the seance room every appearance that might by any possibility suggest that what is therein seen and experienced is not what it is represented to be, and to establish conditions that cannot fail to be satisfactory to every honest seeker for the truth, Mrs. Cowan and her guides are entitled to, and should receive, as they now do from us, the esteem and gratitude of all who would promote the development of elevated and refined mediumship, and aid in the dissemination of that knowledge which modern spiritualism is designed to impart.

*Resolved*, that to Charles D. Cowan, the husband of Mrs. Cowan, and manager of these seances, our thanks are also due, and are hereby tendered, for his hearty co-operation with Mrs. Cowan and her guides, for his orderly conduct of the seances, his considerate regard for the wishes of all who attend them, and his kindly disposition to assist everyone to a comprehension of their high impart.

*Resolved*, that a copy of these resolutions be sent to the editor of the *Banner of Light*, with a request that they be placed before the readers of that able exponent of the truths of modern spiritualism, thereby benefiting the cause by making known through its widely extended circulation one who, as a medium for the materialization of spirit forms, has proven herself to be eminently worthy of the confidence of the public.

E. A. BRACKETT,  
C. PAYSON LONGLEY,  
J. B. SIMONDS,  
ABBOTT WALKER,  
W. H. PEASLEE,  
W. S. RIPLEY,  
MRS. KATE R. STILES,  
MRS. L. M. VIERGE,  
FLORENCE E. RICE,  
F. R. REED,  
A. S. BABCOCK,  
MARIA E. BROWN,  
MRS. A. S. BABCOCK,  
MISS CLARA STEVENS,

J. H. WOODBURY,  
W. F. WHITNEY,  
JOHN S. ADAMS,  
J. S. BALCOLM,  
W. C. NOBLE,  
SIMEON SNOW,  
C. A. THORNE,  
WM. ERSPENMUELLER,  
MRS. SIMEON SNOW,  
MARY A. THOMAS,  
MRS. F. R. REED,  
SAMUEL WRIGHT,  
MRS. CORA S. ALDEN,  
MARGARET ELLIS.



## TRAPPING THE "GHOSTS."

MRS. COWAN SQUARELY CAUGHT—HER HUSBAND ARRESTED FOR ASSAULT.

Last evening the writer decided to pay Mrs. Cowan another visit. He had heard that a small party of gentlemen, several of whom were satisfied of the fraudulent nature of the business, intended to get at the bottom of the thing without much ceremony. These gentlemen had made up their minds to act together at a given signal, and the ladies of the party were provided with materials for instantly illuminating the scene at the proper moment. About 25 gentlemen and ladies were present. The seance continued for nearly half an hour, and several "spirits" had been seen. At length two female forms arose as if from the floor, and advanced toward an old couple on the front row. They were declared to be the dead daughters of the aged people, and, it was said, communicated with them about things celestial. At length three forms were seen moving about, one of them that of a little girl, who laughed and chattered with childish glee as she was "recognized" by this one or that one among the circle. Suddenly a shriek was heard, and in an instant lights were ablaze in the room. Some one had seized a "spirit" form and was trying to peer into her face. She proved to be of veritable flesh and blood, and struggled desperately.

In an instant all was confusion. Whack! Smash came a stove lifter down on the head of the curiously disposed individual, while three or four sluggers in the employ of the establishment made a grand rush to cut off further investigation. But two of the unbelievers were there before them, and succeeded in forcing their way behind the curtains. There they found the medium, Mrs. Cowan, partially disrobed, a man in his shirt sleeves, and a little girl.

"They're killing the medium!" screamed an excited female.

Smash! Down came a black-jack on the head of a man who tried to force open the cabinet, which, by this time, was found to be barricaded by a heavy wooden partition and secured by means of a stout spring lock. It resisted the united efforts of three or four men who tried to kick it down. The two men who had been inside succeeded in dragging out one of the women and stripped her of a cheap cheese-cloth garment with an elastic neckband and short sleeves of a size such as might be worn by a girl of 16. The man who did the clubbing was seen to be Cowan, the husband of the medium, and in his assaults he was joined by two other men, while the fourth contented himself with pulling and hauling at the investigating party. In all a half-dozen blows with black-jacks and the stove lifter were struck by Cowan and his heelers, and one of the visiting party was badly cut on the neck, crown of the head and over the right eye. The resistance made by Cowan was savage and persistent, and not until officer Hensey of the 4th police division burst in the door and placed the twisters on Cowan's wrist did he desist from showing fight.

By this time all the "spirits" outside the cabinet had made their escape into other parts of the suite. One of the visiting party, turning to the officer, exclaimed:

"Mr. Officer, I ask you to arrest that man for assault on this gentleman with this billy," holding aloft a wicked-looking black-jack.

"It's a lie," retorted Cowan, "I didn't hit him. I was only protecting my wife."

"He did hit him," was the chorus of a dozen voices.

"I tried to pull him off," said one excited lady in the room; "it made me sick to see the man so terribly beaten."

About this time an irrepressible individual cried out: "This man is a fraud; he has been swindling us out of our money."

"That's not my business, now," responded the officer; "the question is who saw this assault. Can you identify this man as the assailant?"

A half-dozen people gave their names to the officer, and then somebody exclaimed: "There's another man in the cabinet who did some clubbing; let's have him out!"

"Break in the door!" exclaimed one. "Kick it in," cried another.

"I'll smash any man over the head that breaks into this cabinet," screeched a female voice from behind the partition.

"That's the style of a medium she is," exclaimed a bystander. "Break in the door."

More police officers had by this time arrived, and the police ambulance was in waiting at the street entrance, surrounded by a crowd of curious people.

Two of the officers tore down some of the boards and a woman and child were found within, but the man seemed to have disappeared. Later it was discovered that he was hiding between the partition and the inside drapery.

Cowan was taken to the station house and locked up, followed by a crowd of men and boys. He will be arraigned in court today. The other two men who did the slugging made their escape, but are both known. The assaulted party was taken by his friends, after swearing to the assault at the station house, and Dr. Charles A. Burnham of 266 Tremont street was called to dress his wounds. After the melee another black-jack was picked up in the street, where it had evidently been thrown by one of the "heelers" when the officers entered.

It is said that two young girls who live in Chelsea, and are orphans, have been engaged by the Cowans, one as organist and pianist, and the other as a spirit. There were about 25 persons present who expected to pay \$1 each admission fee, but Mr. Cowan was too much excited to take up the usual collection.

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[FROM BOSTON HERALD.]

### THAT TRAP DOOR.

HOW COWAN'S SPOOKS GOT IN AND OUT.—CRAWLING ON HANDS AND KNEES.—THE CABINET SECRETS EXPOSED AT LAST.—CONFESSIONS OF ONE OF THE CONFEDERATES.—COWAN'S LANDLORD TELLS WHAT HE KNOWS.

Readers of the *Herald* cannot fail to recall with considerable interest the exposure, last spring, of Mr. and Mrs. Charles D. Cowan, the so-called materializing mediums, who were unmasked by a party of gentlemen and ladies, some of whom were savagely assaulted by Mr. Cowan, who used a loaded club with considerable energy and effectiveness. It is fair to assume that business fell off somewhat after the exposure, as some three or four weeks



thereafter Cowan vacated his apartments on Tremont Street, informing his landlord that he was without funds to pay the rent. Just whither he and his "spooks" had gone was not at first known.

At the time of the exposure only a cursory examination of the apartments could be made, for obvious reasons. Mrs. Cowan, when the officers entered, occupied the cabinet, and was discovered en dishabille, and was not molested after this fact was ascertained. It was, however, evident that, by some means or other, the confederates, two of whom were found in the cabinet with Mrs. Cowan, gained ingress and egress at the desired moments. It was so dark during the seances that it was possible they might have been smuggled in through the door of the seance room, enveloped in black cloaks, and pass thence into the cabinets by creeping stealthily along and under the black curtains which covered the front of the cabinet. And as there were confederates in the circle as well as in the cabinet, this might easily be done without attracting notice. During Cowan's occupancy of the apartments it was impossible to make any full investigation, although the matter was by no means forgotten. Evidently, however, many spiritualists and others continued to pin their faith on the genuineness of Cowan's manifestations. The *Banner of Light* had, only a few months before, been lavish in its praise and endorsement of these seances, and, whether intentionally or not, advertised them extensively. One of these editorials reads: "People who have attended the seances of Mrs. A. M. Cowan in this city express themselves as being highly pleased with the conditions and the phenomena, informing us that the most skeptical discover no loophole of escape from the conviction that what they witness are veritable emanations from an unseen realm of intelligence, and find themselves forced to inquire, as suggested by Mr. E. A. Brackett, in the title of his excellent treatise upon materialization, 'If not beings from another life, what are they?'"

Well, indeed, did Cowan and his confederates guard their secret; but, in a moment of carelessness, one of the "spooks" let the cat out of the bag. It is said that a woman can't keep a secret; at any rate, the lady to whom this one was confided considered it too good to keep, and, "quite in confidence, you know," mentioned it to a gentleman. The story proved that the *Herald* was on the right track last spring, and the confession of this confederate—the pretty girl who used to materialize in short skirts as Dr. Whitney's little spirit daughter Ethel—is very significant. Its most interesting feature was the admission that there was a trap through which the confederates crawled into the cabinet from an adjoining room. It remained but to verify this statement, which could only be done by a thorough examination of the premises. The consent of the owner of the estate was sought and obtained, and an investigating committee, composed of the owner's agent, a city inspector of buildings, and several other well-known gentlemen and business men, visited the apartments. They were accompanied by a carpenter with his kit of tools, and had permission to take up floors, if necessary, in the prosecution of their search.

The first suspicious circumstance noted was the fact that the nails in the floor inside the space originally occupied by the cabinet were nearly new and not at all rusted, as were those in the balance of the floor. They were also of a different pattern. The boards had been cut off at short lengths. This section



of flooring was taken up. On the bottom of each board was a letter, and when the boards were laid together in proper order these letters spelled the word SLUMBERING-S-S-S, evidently a private mark, perhaps that which Cowan formerly used in his business as a plumber. A portion of the floor timbers had been sawed off, making a trap door or opening some seventeen or eighteen inches square. In the adjoining room, which Cowan took pains to mention as not being in use by his family, was found a corresponding trap, and these two holes were connected by a cavity in the brick wall, just below the flooring line. The secret of the confederates in the cabinet was thus easily explained, and as the carpet was a thick one, and partially hidden at this point by the black drapery, the temporary fastenings used to keep it in place easily escaped detection. The trap was skilfully made and carefully concealed, paint, mortar, and putty having been deftly used.

A comprehensive description of this device was reported to the owner by the agent\* of the building, as follows: "After Mr. Cowan had ceased to

\* William A. Hayes, Esq., 39 Court Street, Boston.

occupy his apartments, as it was suggested to me that alterations had been made during his occupancy, I made a careful examination of the premises. There were signs that a part of the floor in one of the rooms had been recently disturbed. Upon taking up this part of the floor it was found that the boards of the floor had been sawed, so as easily to be removed, and that a portion of one of the floor timbers had been cut away, and that a hole nearly two feet square had been broken through the brick wall which separated this room from the adjoining one, below the level of the floor. Upon removing the floor, in the adjoining room, directly opposite the hole, it was found that the same operation had been performed; namely, the floor boards had been sawed, and one of the floor timbers cut off and a new timber inserted, leaving a wider space between the floor timbers than before. All these changes had been done with skill, so as to avoid any weakening of the building. The hole through the wall had been filled in with bricks and mortar, and the bricks and the new mortar had been painted. The floor boards had been restored to their former position, having been lettered so that their places could be more easily found."

The agent, in his report, omits to state that the cutting of the traps necessitated sawing through three layers of flooring, and that the marks of the tools were freshly made.

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[FROM THE BOSTON HERALD.]

### CONFESSION OF A "SPIRIT."

HOW ALLEGED MEDIUMS DUPE GULLIBLE FOLLOWERS.—A BOSTON GIRL WHO PLAYED "SPOOK" AT MATERIALIZING SEANCES TELLS HOW THE FRAUD IS PRACTISED.—SOME AMUSING INCIDENTS.—WAGES PAID TO GOOD SPIRIT IMPERSONATORS.

The readers of the *Herald* will remember a description of the "beautiful spirit with the long, waving hair" always to be seen at the Cowan seances. Investigation showed that she was a girl of good family, and, as far as could be ascertained, in other ways entirely respectable. Repeated efforts to secure from her an account of her cabinet experience have until now proved unsuc-

cessful ; but at last a *Herald* reporter, having learned that the "beautiful spirit" had unbosomed herself to several prominent ladies and gentlemen, has succeeded in gaining possession of an authentic history of systematic deception. In telling her story to the reporter the "spirit" imposed one condition ; namely, that her full name should, for family reasons, be suppressed. "The beautiful spirit," who now devotes her time and talents to affairs and occupations entirely material, thus describes her connection with the colossal humbug advertised as "materialization" :

"I was induced to enter this business, having heard about it from a lady friend who had shown me much kindness, and who also knew how dependent I was upon my own exertions for a living. Through this lady Mr. and Mrs. Cowan came to the house where I was living, and, after some conversation about the business, and how easily one could become an expert after being initiated into its mysteries, they went away, remarking that they thought I would be just the person they wanted. I called on them several times for instruction and rehearsals previous to being introduced into the cabinet as a "spirit." The salary they offered was in excess of what I could possibly earn in my chosen occupation, and I was induced to take up the business. The position I was to occupy was at that time filled by Mrs. Florence K. Rich, who was a performer of such ability in this line as to make her services in great demand in other cabinets, her salary being double that of others in the same business."

"Under what circumstances did you make your debut as a spirit?" queried the reporter.

"It was at an afternoon seance. Mrs. Rich, in the garb of a spirit, led me from the cabinet as another visitor from the unseen world. I had been instructed with great care as to the role I should enact. I advanced to where Dr. Whitney and his wife were sitting, and represented myself as their dead daughter Ethel. I had been carefully instructed in the stock phrases of the cabinet, and taught how to locate any desired individual in the circle by counting the number of chairs from the cabinet, and thus finding the person specified by the manager. On each trip I was instructed what to say. In a very short time I learned the names of all the regular patrons, and also knew whom they most wished to see from the spirit world."

"Tell me, if you know, something about the circumstances under which the Cowans built up their extensive business."

"I learned from them that they commenced business in the fall of 1886 or 1887, I have forgotten which, at 612 Tremont Street. In the parlance of the cabinet, Mrs. Cowan was, after a few lessons, 'developed' by George T. Albro, at his establishment at No. 55 Rutland Street, where she served in his cabinet as a 'spirit' for a short time. Two kinds of cabinets were used. One was square in shape, with curtains at the back, reaching to the floor, and tightly drawn underneath and buttoned. After the cabinet was examined by those in the circle who wished to see that all was fair, the lights were lowered and the curtains unbuttoned and raised for the entrance of the 'spirits.' Immediately in the rear of the cabinet used by the Cowans was a door leading into a room which the 'spirits' used as their headquarters. This door had been locked with a great show of sincerity, and the key handed to some one in the circle for safe keeping. The Cowans, however, had constructed a



clever device, by means of which, with a small stick inserted in the casing, the bolt of the lock could be thrown back by the 'spirits,' who could noiselessly enter the cabinet, amid the singing of the circle and the noise of the cabinet organ. Each white-robed 'spirit' was shrouded in black cambric while passing from the room into the cabinet, thus rendering them invisible in the dim light of the seance room. It was about this time that Mr. Cowan made the discovery of a new and admirable location for his cabinet in a bay-window on the street front. To all appearances this cabinet was fraud-proof, and so successful were the seances that visitors and believers were attracted in great numbers. Mr. Cowan's discovery was accidental. While removing the floor in the bay-window, in order to construct a trap-door by which the 'spirits' might enter from the cellar, he found a space of considerable dimensions so peculiarly arranged as to have no visible connection with the cellar, rendering it absolutely safe from discovery. The male 'spirits' were personated by Mr. Cowan's brother Andrew (called Andy for short), while Mrs. Cowan and I played the role of female 'spirits,' each having our signals for entrances and exits. Business went on prosperously."

"Will you not give a few illustrations of cabinet manifestations with which you were connected?"

"Well, I remember two 'spirits' who used to come to Mr. E. A. Brackett, of Winchester. Mr. Brackett is the author of a book on the subject of materialization, entitled 'If Not Spiritual Beings, What Are They?' and has always been looked upon as a high authority on the subject. Mr. John Wetherbee also had the freedom of all the circles. Mr. Brackett was very demonstrative in the seance room, and inclined to overdo his part in announcing the remarkable tests which he experienced. I personated his niece Bertha, whom he desired to see on every occasion. I came to him 'strong and lively,' in cabinet language, always calling him 'uncle,' and grasping him by the hand and leading him up to the cabinet for whisperings with the 'spirits.' Mr. Brackett would express great delight at seeing me, and would earnestly ask if I had 'been near him all the time since the last appearance.' In order to furnish convincing proof for some of the skeptics, I would materialize for Mr. Brackett at the back of his chair, or in some remote part of the room. In order to do this, it was necessary for me to creep behind the black curtain that hung around the wall, counting the chairs by feeling as I crept along, until I came to the one occupied by Mr. Brackett. I would then jump up and greet him, 'How do you do, uncle?' and take him by the hand. 'Andy' always personated Mr. Brackett's dead brother George, and we were often greatly amused by his enthusiastic descriptions of our seances in the *Banner of Light*. Mr. Wetherbee was also very enthusiastic in his descriptions of our manifestations, especially those at 219 A Tremont Street.

"Mr. John Low, of Chelsea, was another frequent visitor. He was very hard to please. He required many 'spirits,' and was not satisfied unless he saw them all in the same evening. His favorites, outside of his own family circle, were the spirits of Phæbe and Alice Cary, whom he would lead to the centre of the room and introduce to the circle. The famous sisters were always personated by Mrs. Cowan and myself.

"After a while, Mr. Cowan, desiring more privacy, decided to remove into apartments which should be occupied by his own family exclusively. He

located at 219A Tremont Street, where he constructed another cabinet, introducing the 'spirits' through a trap-door in the corner, leading under the partition into the next room. The hinges of the trap were placed on the under side so as to escape detection while feeling over the carpet with which the floor was covered. Access was had to the 'spirit-room' through a hole chiseled out of the brick partition wall between the two floors. It was very easy for us to creep in and out of the cabinet on our hands and knees."

"Can you explain the sudden appearances of the two white forms at the cabinet opening?"

"Oh, yes; that is very simple. When Mrs. Cowan, in her role as medium, would enter the cabinet from the seance room, after having been introduced to the circle, she was already attired in her spirit robe, over which she wore a dark dress, so constructed as to drop off almost instantly. At the same moment I crawled rapidly through the hole from the private room, and thus two materialized spirits were suddenly revealed, to the great astonishment of the circle."

"What prominent people do you remember as among your visitors at this latter place?"

"There was Mr. T. P. Beals, of Portland, who first visited us in company with Mrs. Rich. From her we obtained, on the 'test exchange plan,' points and information by which we were enabled to satisfy him that his wife and sister actually appeared. Mrs. Cowan personated the sister, and I the wife. I can tell you a funny little story about Mr. Beals. It seems that one night when he was attending a seance at Mrs. Rich's, the spirit 'Dew Drop,' her control, suggested that he give 'Medie' his wife's diamond ring, which he was then wearing on his little finger. To this robbery I, the 'spirit wife,' strenuously objected, when he consulted me about it a few evenings later, and Mr. Beals may thank me for the preservation of his ring. A Mr. Russell, of Cambridgeport, was very anxious to see his 'three darlings,' as he designated his two deceased wives and his intended third. There were only two of us women in the caste. Now, how do you suppose we managed it? It was very simple, I assure you. We merely rigged up 'Andy' in female apparel, and worked him in as 'the third intended.' Andy was a little shaky, however, having positively refused to sacrifice his mustache; and so the excuse was invariably offered that the spirit of the 'intended' was never 'strong' enough to get very far away from the cabinet. We had many a laugh over Andy's nervousness while wearing petticoats.

"Mr. William D. Brewer often used to come and converse with the spirit of Louisa, his wife. He also had three familiar spirits, of whom he was very fond. He spoke of them affectionately as 'Faithy,' 'Hopey' and 'Lovey.' Mrs. Cowan and I alternated in producing these spirits in appropriate disguises. Mr. Brewer was so infatuated that he arranged for private seances for once a week, paying at the rate of \$10 for each sitting. Mr. Brewer was very fond of playing the organ at these seances while we 'spirits' joined in the singing. We also furnished him with numerous messages of love and comfort from the spirit world. About this time Mr. Brewer had private seances with Mrs. Rich at her rooms at No. 175 Tremont street, where the same 'spirits' appeared to him, as he declared. At any rate, they were satisfactory, Mrs. Rich being well acquainted with his wants. At one of Mrs. Rich's sittings



Mr. Brewer requested to see Mr. Ayer's popular Back Bay Temple 'Queen' in her illuminated robes. This robe was manufactured especially for this occasion by Mr. Charles H. Bridge, an expert in spirit paraphernalia, and was similar to that in which the ex-medium, Mrs. Hatch, was wont to masquerade.

"I think the hardest time I ever had was in the role of Little Elsie, a spirit child, supposed to be only 3 years old. My make-up consisted of a short frock, and a veil wound closely around my face, concealing the greater portion of it, and making it appear diminutive. I had cultivated quite a baby vocabulary, and had studied up cute little baby speeches. I never failed to keep the circle in good humor. I always did this baby act crouching down on my knees at the cabinet opening, and at that distance was said to be a great success.

"By all odds the most absurd thing was the ovation to Mrs. Cowan, tendered by about 30 believers, who presented her with a purse of \$65, for, as the spokesman expressed it, 'her efforts to eliminate from the seance room every suggestion of fraud, and the opportunities she has afforded us for interviews with our angel friends.'

"Were you present when the *Herald* reporter and a party of friends broke up the Cowan seance and exposed Mrs. Cowan and her confederates?"

"Yes, that was an exciting night. The room was full, and everything was going along smoothly until Mrs. Cowan was seized by some one in the circle while personating a spirit. A voice cried out, 'Now!' and lights suddenly flashed through the room. We tried to escape, and during the excitement that followed succeeded in creeping through the trap-door into the spirit room, while Cowan stood guard. In the confusion I was seized by some one, and only escaped by slipping out of my spirit robe, which the raiders kept as one of their trophies. After this raid the use of this trap-door was abandoned."

"Were you spirits not in constant fear of exposure?"

"Yes, we were always under a great mental strain, and I scarcely ever concluded a seance without a severe headache. There was no danger from the believers, so complete was their confidence in whatever we did, no matter how absurd or apparently impossible."

"To what extent are 'test exchanges' carried on?"

"All materializing mediums are in league together, and information is exchanged on application. It is very rarely that a visitor is accorded a sitting on the occasion of a first visit. He is pretty thoroughly 'pumped,' however, and the medium is thus enabled to communicate with others in the same line of business, and to ascertain such facts in reference to his family and friends as can be used in producing successful tests. When in the seance room 'tips' are given to us by the manager, who takes a sharp view of the sitters, whom he has placed about the circle to suit his own convenience. He then communicates to us the names of the spirits it is safe to present, and the location of each believer in the circle; and, lest memory be treacherous, a record of these 'points' is kept in the spirit room for frequent reference, together with the messages to be delivered to the faithful."

"What is the usual weekly salary of a 'spirit'?"

"The spirit, when inexperienced, usually receives \$1 for each seance. Mrs. Rich was paid \$3 a seance, and this is the highest price I ever knew to be paid for a single seance. I should say that \$1.50 is a pretty fair price for playing spirit."

[FROM THE RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL.]

## THE BOSTON BRAND MATERIALIZATION.

In the Boston *Herald* of February 23 there appeared under the caption "Confession of a spirit," the most graphic account of the inside workings of a successful "fraud proof" cabinet that has ever been published. As far as it went the published account was truthful and accurate; but many choice bits of descriptive did not find their way into type, possibly because the editor failed to comprehend the audacity of the tricksters who manipulate the materializing machine. The proofs of the construction of two of the cabinet traps described in the article still remain in the floor at their respective localities. The identity of the Cowan "spirit" was known all the time, and can be proved by unimpeachable testimony. The "spirits" this young woman impersonated and the makeups and disguises for them, can be established not only by her victims but by several of her friends who were in the secret, and who were present from time to time as spectators of the show. It is perhaps needless to say that the Cowans enjoyed the unbounded confidence of all their victims when one recalls the oration and presentation of a purse of money by J. W. Fletcher who, in complimenting Mrs. Cowan, thanked her "for the opportunities afforded for interviews with our angel friends."

The readers of the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* will be interested to learn that additional facts have been recently gathered in a more confidential conference with the "beautiful spirit" by which to supplement the *Herald* confession. A venerable gentleman whose sideshow was the Cowan cabinet for those gifted poets the Cary sisters, but whose devotion to the Albro cabinet never wavers even at captured wigs of the Princess White Thorn, hits off the happy events in his favorite cabinet with child-like innocence. His spirits have become so familiar that they take from his shirt-front gold pins and studs for their own use in the "summer land," explaining the appropriation of these trinkets by stating that "spirits are just as fond of bright, pretty articles as we mortals are," and are encouraged and strengthened by gifts to "come stronger and stronger." He even went so far in this line as to pass into the cabinet an armful of aesthetic tiles to be dematerialized for "spirit land." The Cowans, having been "developed" by Albro and advertised by him as "doing good work in the field," copied this enterprising business feature from their tutor, and encouraged presents to the spirits of every name and nature. Doctor Whitney, on one harmonious occasion, presented the spirits of the Cowan cabinet with two gold rings. One of these he placed upon the finger of his spirit daughter, Ethel, who ever after wore the ring when materializing for him. Ethel, in her short blue dress and hair flowing over her shoulders, was the star of the cabinet. Mr. Simeon Snow brought roses for his spirit daughter on the assurance of the medium that "roses were very welcome to the spirits in cold weather;" forgetting, perhaps, the beautiful legends of "the bright land where flowers forever bloom." The title of "Prince of Givers" to the spirits must, however, be awarded to Mr. Wm. D. Brewer, whose presents possessed the charm of novelty and variety as well as plenty. His visits to the seance room were always characterized by big bundles containing fruit, confectionery of all kinds, and flowers in profusion. Some would be bestowed upon the spirit of Louisa, his wife,



and a large proportion were presented to his favorite spirits, whom he affectionately designated as "Faithy," "Hopey" and "Lovey." Mr. Brewer also lavished choice cigars on the spirit of "White Moccasin," an Indian brave to whom he was greatly attached. Readers of the *Journal* will not be surprised that the "Big Injun" was personated by Mr. Cowan, decked out in blankets and feathers, he having leisure for this kind of masquerading at private seances when the arduous duties of manager were not required. The familiar child of the Cowan cabinet, "Little Elsie," was never known to advance into the circle, for the best of reasons. The young woman who personated her was upon her knees, and was attired in a short child's frock, yet so real did she appear to the believers that she was affectionately remembered by Miss Maria E. Brown who presented her with a large doll, and by a French gentleman who gave her a pretty child's ring. Mr. Pilling, a familiar visitor at the Albion seances, held frequent communion with the spirit of an Indian maiden in short red skirts and black wig. Mr. Pilling was very grateful for these manifestations, and acknowledged the compliment by numerous theatre passes.

Mr. Brackett, after a successful materialization for him, led his "Bertha" around the circle, inviting all to "handle her hair, and to notice that it was not a wig but a genuine, freshly materialized" article. The spirit of Mr. John Wetherbee's "Gracie" was personated for him by the young woman who makes the confession, while Mrs. Cowan played the role of "Flossie," who never failed to be recognized as the genuine spirit. Mr. Russell's "three darlings" were sufficiently mentioned in the *Herald*, as was also the wife of Mr. Beal whom he was sure was his genuine spouse because she called him "hubby."

In the Cowan cabinet there were but three "spooks," including the medium, save on some special occasion, such as the testimonial, when Ethel secured a confederate to fulfil a promise made to Dr. Whitney that she would bring a warm friend she had in the other life. This she did to the great satisfaction of the doctor, besides taking the remarkable spirit walk before described through rooms and corridors to find the doctor on that evening of financial prosperity for the Cowans.

The names of the gentlemen above recorded are not given for the purpose of casting reflections on their characters, but because they are proud to be known as witnesses of such astonishing manifestations of "spirit power," and do not hesitate to publish their experience to an unbelieving world. The writer's sole intent is to furnish them with an object lesson and, if possible, benefit other believers in the cabinet. Here we have the story of one young girl who has for a year or more personated their Ethels, Berthas, Gracies, Louisas, wives and daughters innumerable, Indian maidens and child spirits, and have been invariably "recognized" in all these roles by the gentlemen above named, and hosts of others. These recognitions were so vivid and conclusive that they were uniformly acknowledged by a cordial embrace and parting kiss, the caresses in some instances being prolonged to an unseemly extent. And yet there was not one of these deluded victims of cabinet tricks who could not by a "grab" and flash of light have become thoroughly convinced of the outrageous swindle of materialization, and at the same time learned how thoroughly they have been deceived.

J. C.

[From Boston Record.]

## ANOTHER MEDIUM PROVED TO BE A FRAUD.

SHOWN IN TRUE COLORS BY "THE RECORD." A SPIRIT GETS TOO FAMILIAR WITH SKEPTICAL MORTALS, AND LOSES HER BACK HAIR AND REPUTATION TOO.

Of all the shameless frauds ever perpetrated upon a confiding public, none have been more successful than those practised by so-called "materializing mediums." They are heartless, because they trifle with the tenderest emotions of which the human heart is capable; and they are sacreligious, too, because they profess to bring comfort to sorrowing hearts under the guise of a certain form of religion—known as spiritualism—while their only real object is to obtain money under false pretences, and to deceive an unsuspecting or half-convinced public.

"Give us your dollars," say these cheats, frauds, liars and humbugs, "and we will

'Summon up your dearest spirits.'

The *Record*, which is steadily engaged in an unrelenting warfare upon dishonesty, corruption, fraud and humbuggery, and in defending the rights and interests of the people, is now enabled to expose one of these interesting materializing tricksters, and one of the lowest and most despicable in the city.

## MRS. HEMAN B. FAY.

## SHE LAYS DOWN HER RULES.

Standing in front of the cabinet Mrs. Fay said:

"Before commencing my seance, I wish to give my rules for conducting it. First, I wish that forms which come out of the cabinet sha'n't be molested; second, no one must move about the room during the seance; third, *if any form do appear, remember that it isn't me*; fourth, keep your feet flat on the floor. (This was so that any too curious investigator couldn't trip up the alleged materialized spirit.) If any one don't want to do as I say, they can now leave the room before the seance begins. It is my rule to take up the fee before the seance begins."

All remained in the room. Capt. Dixon and Mrs. Fay passed around the room, collecting, as near as the writer could judge, \$25—\$1 per head. The captain then lighted a candle, and an opportunity was given to all who desired to examine the cabinet. The writer and an elderly gentleman were the only ones who availed themselves of the privilege. It was the regulation cabinet, with a door and two windows. The back of it was said by the medium, who entered with the writer, to be a very simple folding door. The writer acquiesced, although he was positive in his own mind that it was a door opening into the back room, from which the medium's confederates entered the cabinet. After the examiners had resumed their seats, the medium laughingly said that if anyone wanted to sit in the back room during the seance they might do so; although a man who had once done so had seen his wife in the mirror, and had been frightened half to death, which she declared to be good enough for him. No one left the main room, however.



## THE EXPOSURE.

The figure had by this time evidently become convinced that it had a sympathetic audience, and ventured far down the room. It appeared as a gipsy girl, with long hair flowing down her back. Advancing boldly down the room it paused in front of the gentleman sitting next to the writer, and confidently stretched forth both hands. Like a flash the man clinched them in a strong grasp and ejaculated "Now!" Instantly *The Record* man ignited his bunch of matches and the chandelier was a blaze of light. Other ready hands stripped away the curtains and the sun's rays flooded the room with an additional brilliancy. What a sight met the eyes of the believers and others who were not on the inside! In the centre of the room, directly under the blaze of the chandelier, struggling, fighting, biting, scratching and clinching like a tigress in the grasp of four strong men, who had all they could do to hold her, was that arch fraud and arrant humbug, cheat and imposter, Mrs. Heman Fay. She had said that the form would not be hers, but

She got there just the same.

Her flowing hair, a switch about two feet long, had been torn from her head in the melee, as was also her "spirit robe," a piece of cheap cotton gauze, about four yards long and two and a half yards wide. Capt. Dixon, who attempted to rescue Mrs. Fay, was grabbed around the neck by another athletic young man. He struggled vigorously and shouted "G—d d—n you, let me go!" But he was held in a firm clasp. Mrs. Fay's desire was, of course, to get into the cabinet. So she made a show of fainting, and was sprinkled with water by one of her attendants. Her captors, however, were onto her little game, and held her tight. In the meantime one of the writer's friends had made a break for the cabinet, which he found to be closed. But he burst open the door, and there found the "old auntie," a tough old gal who would tip the scales certainly at 200 pounds. She was the confederate who had helped to dress Mrs. Fay. She fought hard, but was ejected by the gentleman, as were also Mrs. Fay's skirt and her shoes. These were ingenious contrivances composed of three pieces of cork nailed together, one on top of the other, and having a strap to fasten them to Mrs. Fay's feet. When she represented the "ancient guide" and other tall figures, she put these on her feet to add to her height. In the pocket of the skirt was a comb and a chamois skin powder-pad for whitening the face. The Dixon girl made her escape in the confusion, although she was chased by one of the young men, who caught sight of her.

## THE CLOSING SCENES.

Loud demands for their money were made by the unbelievers, and Capt. Dixon was compelled to shell out \$1 to all who demanded it. The lady who had been duped into believing that she had seen her old colored sewing woman said: "Well, gentlemen, I am ashamed of my sex. I have believed in this, but now am undeceived. It is a terrible fraud. I thank you for this expose." Similar sentiments were expressed by other dupes.

BRIEF HISTORY OF A DUTCH ADVENTURESS WHO IS ENDORSED AND DEFENDED BY THE "OLDEST SPIRITUALIST PAPER ON EARTH." A WOMAN WHO IS A DISGRACE TO HER SEX.

To the Editor of the Religio-Philosophical Journal :

As so many inquiries are being made as to the character and antecedents of Mrs. Heman B. Fay, of 62 West Newton St., Boston, the notorious swindling materializing medium, I have taken the trouble to extract from the files of the Court here certain sworn testimony of Mrs. Flinn, who was a leading witness in a recent action which was the outcome of Mrs. Fay's disgraceful exposure a year ago, and with the husband of whom, Captain Flinn, a part of Mrs. Fay's life is somewhat conspicuously identified. Mrs. Flinn now resides at Chatham, Mass., and we have been careful to ascertain that she is a highly respectable and reputable lady. Here is her story in substance :

Mrs. Fay came from Holland, in the mock capacity of stewardess, in a vessel commanded by Captain Flinn, the said vessel carrying no passengers, and therefore the position of stewardess being a sinecure, except as subsequently transpired, to minister to the captain's whims during the voyage. Her name was then Bertha Feinsh. On arrival in this country she succeeded in stealing away the captain's affections from his wife, who was a true woman, and unwavering in her fidelity to her husband until the last. Bertha, however, appropriated her place at table, took his arm in the presence of his wife, and jeering at her before him, boastfully plumed herself on having transferred his affections, and on one occasion threatened the terrified woman with a pistol if she ever got her out to sea.

Mrs. Flinn, poor soul, remained persistent in her endeavors to recover the fast waning affections of her spouse, but to no avail, for he deserted her for his Bertha, and so this villainous, unprincipled creature succeeded in forever blasting the happiness of the Flinn home, for the captain was not proof against her vulgar fascinations. Bertha now announces herself as Mrs. Flinn, though, mark you, she was never married to him, for his wife was never divorced and, as we have seen, is now living at Chatham, Mass. Shortly after this the captain was lost at sea ; and in this connection Bertha made some pretty spiritualistic play, for long after she had received proof that Captain Flinn was drowned, she gave out to a confiding believer (now a resident of Hyde Park, Mass.) that she knew she would never see him again, as he had come to her in spirit form, and strewn her bedquilt with materialized flowers ! Thus she claimed the gift of prophecy.

In the above is the sworn evidence of poor Mrs. Flinn, in its essentialness. We next hear of Mrs. Fay as practicing her swindling wiles at a house at the south end of Boston. . . . .

A license was taken out, and she married under the assumed name of Mrs. Flinn, though strangely enough, the most vigorous search fails to bring the register to light in the City Hall Records.

This woman is of course lost to all sense of shame, for she has been twice publicly exposed within as many years (at the last of which exposures I was present), and her machinations over the weak minded have enabled her to acquire a free title in her own name to the \$10,000 house on West Newton Street, where she still continues to swindle her simple-minded adherents. . . .

DEPOSITION OF MRS. FLINN, WIFE OF CAPT. FLINN, IN  
THE CASE OF MRS. FAY *VS.* "BOSTON RECORD."

*Question.* — Do you know Mrs. Bertha Fay?

*Answer.* — I do.

*Ques.* — When and where did you first see her?

*Ans.* — I saw her on board the barque "Belvidere," in 1872, in Boston.

*Ques.* — Please state everything that took place between you at that time, and everything that took place in the interview.

*Ans.* — She would not allow him to treat me as his wife. She said I was jealous, and she said I was not the first captain's wife she had made jealous, and she would do so whenever she had an opportunity. Also, she had stolen his affections from me. During this while on board there was some little trouble between the captain and one of his officers that she was concerned in. It seems there was a talk of their having an engagement between her and this officer. The officer and captain and this woman were talking about it. The trouble was about that affair, it seems; they wanted me to remain in the cabin as a witness. It seems the captain went into his stateroom. I saw him take a pistol and put it in his pocket. The excitement became so great that I left and went into the stateroom and locked the door.

*Ques.* — Did you hear anything that took place while you were in this stateroom?

*Ans.* — Well, there was loud talk and conversation. The officer wanted to get this woman ashore with him, and the captain objected to it. After the excitement was over, the captain came to the door and I unlocked it. He called me into the cabin and laid his pistol down.

*Ques.* — Where was Mrs. Fay when you came out of the stateroom?

*Ans.* — In the cabin.

*Ques.* — What took place in her presence after you came out of the stateroom?

*Ans.* — The captain went into the stateroom, and she followed him. I was ordered by the captain into the cabin. She took up the pistol that lay where the captain put it, and she said, "Mrs., if I could get you out at sea, I would put the pluck into you." The captain says, "Bertha, put that up."

*Ques.* — What was the next thing that happened in her presence?

*Ans.* — She wanted that he should leave me at his brother's. She said that several times. She said that she did not want me on board.

*Ques.* — To whom did she say this?

*Ans.* — To the captain, in my presence.

*Ques.* — What was her position on board the ship?

*Ans.* — Apparently stewardess.

*Ques.* — Was it a passenger ship?

*Ans.* — I should say not.

*Ques.* — Have you been on your husband's ships before 1872, when he was in port?

*Ans.* — I have.

*Ques.* — Did he ever before have a stewardess on board, to your knowledge?

*Ans.* — No, sir.



*Ques.* — Did you take any meals on board your husband's ship while Mrs. Fay was there?

*Ans.* — I did.

*Ques.* — What, if anything, did she say or do about your meals there?

*Ans.* — Well, she did not give me my place at the table at all; the seat where I should have been, next to the captain, she would take, and make sport of me during meal time.

*Ques.* — Did you say anything about your seat at the table, or she to you?

*Ans.* — I did.

*Ques.* — Please state all.

*Ans.* — I told her she had taken my place from me. She said, Why didn't I take my place? She and the captain wouldn't allow me to. I told her I didn't take my place because she would not let me have it; she took my seat from me.

*Ques.* — What did she do or say during meals to make sport of you?

*Ans.* — She made sport of me in this way; that she had taken my place and stolen his affections from me.

*Ques.* — Did you ever hear her say anything to your husband about his giving you money?

*Ans.* — I did.

*Ques.* — When was it, and where?

*Ans.* — On board his vessel in 1873.

*Ques.* — What did she say about that?

*Ans.* — He ought not to let me have so much money. I wanted this money to purchase something, and she told him not to let me have it.

*Ques.* — Did you and your husband and she ever go away from the vessel together?

*Ans.* — We did.

*Ques.* — What, if anything, did she say or do about your walking with your husband, or taking his arm, in her presence?

*Ans.* — She would take his arm and go ahead with him, and leave me in the distance. Sometimes they would leave me alone in the crowd, both in the night and in the daytime.

*Ques.* — Did your husband, or not, after 1873, abandon you?

*Ans.* — He deserted me.

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[FROM THE RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL.]

#### ABOUT A BOSTON FRAUD'S LIBEL SUIT.

Possibly the *Journal's* readers will recall, among the numerous frauds exposed in Boston, one known to the public as Mrs. H. B. Fay. For comments on her private character in connection with the exposure, she brought suit against the *Evening Record* of that city for \$50,000. With its customary alacrity in aiding swindlers to retain their hold upon the public, or to regain it when lost, the *Banner of Light* published a statement concerning the finale of this suit calculated to mislead the public, and bring a fresh grist to the mill of the unconscionable trickster. In order to set the spiritualistic public right on this matter, the *Journal* re-publishes from the *Evening Record* its explanation of the matter, and also a letter from a reputable citizen of Boston, which the *Banner* declined to publish.

## STATEMENT OF THE "EVENING RECORD."

We have received a number of letters complaining that we ought not to have settled the libel suit brought against the *Record* by a well-known "medium" at the South End. We never should have settled any libel suit simply based on our exposure of a "medium." But our reporter, unfortunately, dragged in another charge against the "medium's" character, which was not so easy to prove. We therefore paid on the suit for \$50,000, \$400 and costs, amounting in all to \$445. We never shall settle any libel suits brought for our exposures of spiritualistic seances.

## SUPPRESSED LETTER FROM J. C.

*To the Banner of Light :*

In your editorial columns last week (Oct. 20th), under the head of "Mrs. H. B. Fay Vindicated," you state :

"For a long time there has been in existence in this city a band of bigots, bound, its members said, to put down *vi et armis* all physical mediums."

Allow me to say, without any binding force whatever, a number of ladies and gentlemen, many of them well-known spiritualists, having first satisfied themselves that the so-called materializers were deceiving their dupes for money, did invade and expose the rottenness of the whole business in Boston. In discovering confederates, capturing nearly half a hundred disguises, including samples from every one of them, uncovering holes under floors and in brick walls for "spirits" to creep through to the cabinet, besides other positive proofs of fraud, they were successful, as is admitted on all sides by those disposed to examine the evidences. Mrs. Fay, in her libel suit, did not have the hardihood to attempt a vindication of her materializing seances. The sentence on which the libel rested is as follows: "It is alleged that her (Mrs. Fay's, then known as Bertha Feinsh) relations were such that his wife (Mrs. Flinn) left him." Mrs. Flinn, widow of Capt. Flinn, resides at Chatham, Mass., and is well known as a lady above reproach. In her deposition she testifies that through all her troubles she clung to her husband with the evident purpose to rescue him from an infatuation. It will be plainly seen the reporter's statement was not technically correct. On this turn of affairs the *Advertiser* company deemed it advisable to pay Mrs. Fay the expenses of her suit, which would be much less than the cost and bother of a trial. Mrs. Fay accepted the settlement, through her counsel, though her damages were laid at \$50,000. It seems somewhat ignominious that she should descend from so costly a pinnacle of character to one which could be purchased for the small sum of her lawyer's costs. No greater alacrity was shown by the plaintiff than the defendant for a prompt trial. In withdrawing the case no apology was asked for, much less published, as mentioned in your article. J. C.

[FROM THE RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL.]

Early in September, 1884, we received a letter from an esteemed friend, Mrs. Lita Barney Sayles, covering a communication for the *Journal*. The article was an account of her experiences with Mrs. Beste. On the first of October following we wrote Mrs. Sayles, and enclosed with the letter a proposition for Mrs. Beste, copies of which follow :

## COPY OF LETTER TO MRS. SAYLES.

CHICAGO, Ill., Oct. 1, 1884.

MRS. LITA BARNEY SAYLES, KILLINGLY, CONN. :

*Dear Mrs. Sayles,* — In the matter of your article recounting experiences with Mrs. Beste, I have to say that I am perfectly willing to publish it so far as I am personally and professionally concerned ; my only hesitation arises from my regard for you. Should I publish it, I shall deem it my duty to refer to



certain matters which seem wholly unfamiliar to you in the history of Mrs. Beste, and to ask about a dozen questions which you will find it much trouble and some expense to be able to answer correctly.

I believe the publication of your communication, with such matter following it as suggested above, will place you in a position which you do not covet. Where the interests of spiritualism and those of the public are at stake it has always been my rule to hold those interests paramount to all considerations of personal friendship. Nevertheless, unless forced thereto, I don't seek to go out of my way to place a friend in an unfortunate plight before the public; hence, out of sincere friendship for you I believe it my duty to tell you of these things, but without advice from me, leaving you free to decide what you shall do in this Beste matter.

It is plainly apparent from the information in my possession that you have been grossly misled by Mrs. Beste in making up your judgment of her past career; and, this being so, the inference is irresistible that you have also been misled in much, if not all, of your experiences with her physical manifestations; though, of course, in this I may be wholly in error, and I set up no final judgment thereon.

Now I have a proposition to make, which I will put upon a separate sheet, and you cannot better advance the interest of spiritualism, as well as of justice, than by securing its acceptance.

With kind regards, I remain, as ever,

Fraternally yours,

JNO. C. BUNDY.

A few extracts from Mrs. Sayles' account as published are given as follows:

"Mrs. Beste's materialization seances comprise three phases, and are at present held in total darkness. . . . .

"A peculiarity of these spirit forms appears in the great illumination of their robes, and sometimes of their faces. This is often very brilliant, and consists of coruscations of light in points and patches and stars and crescents, added to the general glow which pervades the whole 'spirit,' and renders it visible. These often change in place while the 'spirit' stands before one. You cannot tell whether your hand or your handkerchief are any color but black, yet the "spirit" is plainly seen and all its movements can be well noted. I have seen thirty-five or forty spirits, of all sizes, make their appearance in an evening, her sittings usually lasting three hours, and often exceeding that time. . . . .

"The ancient spirits of whom I speak come, it is said, from the oldest civilizations of our globe, both historic and pre-historic, and sometimes from beyond this earth's atmosphere. They are always particularly bright, and often magnificent in brilliancy, and bring strength and power. It is this class of spirits who have been directors in the whole movement of modern spiritualism." . . . . .

In the August, 1885, number of *Facts* (?) a monthly magazine published by Mr. L. L. Whitlock, Mrs. Sayles furnishes in the leading article an account of a seance had with Mrs. Beste on the 19th of July. This sitting was given to "ladies only," before whom Mrs. Beste completely disrobed and stood nude while her clothing was removed and a white morning dress brought her by Mrs. Sayles. With this, and her own stockings replaced upon her feet, she, as events proved, was in good working trim. After a while even the morning dress was discarded and tossed out of the cabinet by "Tom." This denudation seems to have stimulated the "power" immensely. We quote one scene from Mrs. Sayles's account:

"Apollonius, who almost always appears, came out with his majestic proportions of body and brain, his brawny hand striking his massive chest, his long sleeves drooping to the floor, the lower portion of his body draped, also his head, and all, together with his sleeves, highly illuminated. His voice is very heavy, and is heard out on the bluffs across the boulevard when he speaks. He uses quite good English this year — it was more imperfect last year. Being requested, he placed his hand, large and strong, upon the heads of those present and blessed them with strength and power.

#### BESTE'S CRUEL FARCE EXPOSED.

The Hartford (Conn.) *Daily Times* for Thursday, the 8th inst., says editorially:

"Some of the spiritualists of Hartford last night effectually exposed a fraudulent materializing medium who is well known in Boston spiritualistic circles as Mrs. Eugene Beste."

It appears that the circle of twenty persons was largely composed of spiritualists, among whom were Mr. Edwin P. Miller, a well-known business man, and Grosvenor Swan, M. D. These two gentlemen are refined, intelligent, experienced, and trustworthy, to our personal knowledge. They join in a letter now before us in vouching for the completeness of the exposure and the truthfulness of the account as published in the *Times*. It may also be stated that one, or possibly more, of the publishers of the paper are spiritualists.

The account in the *Times* was prepared by one of its publishers. After some description of a previous seance, and of Mrs. Beste's personal appearance, the account continues as follows:

"Another seance was announced for Wednesday evening. Two or three ladies agreed to aid in the 'exposure.' W. J. Shea, pressman in the *Times* office, and Patrick Keefe, janitor of the *Times* building, men of muscular power, who were ready to tackle a ghost or a burglar at the word 'go,' were engaged to seize the medium at a signal on Wednesday evening. Two ladies were stationed to cut the wire in front of the audience, and another was to give the signal to Shea and Keefe at the proper time. The second scene was selected for the grand denouement. There was total darkness. The medium was playing the part of a returned spirit, her phosphorescent muslin, on which were spots of illuminated paint, showing a distinct form in front of the curtains. The lady on guard gave the signal to Shea and Keefe. Both of them sprang at a bound, and had the 'spirit' in their stalwart arms. A shrill shriek pierced the air. Mrs. House quickly brought in a large library lamp, and there was Mrs. Beste, with most of her clothing removed, and covered in a phosphorescent sheet of lace, resting in the arms of Shea and Keefe! Here was a scene not printed in the bills. The woman tried to sink down on the floor, but the strong arms of her supporters lifted her up and sat her in a chair, where she was the object of derision by the spectators.

Mrs. Beste, the perspiration running from her very finger-ends, was questioned. She admitted all; said that she had played this humbug and deception for several years, and that the Boston materializers were also frauds. Sidney E. Clarke, after hearing her confession, embodied it in the following affidavit, which Mrs. Beste readily signed and swore to its truth:



STATE OF CONNECTICUT, }  
COUNTY OF HARTFORD, } SS.

I, Eugene Beste, of the city of Washington, D. C., being duly sworn, depose and say that I am the identical person known as Mrs. Beste, the voice medium; that I have given exhibitions in Boston, Mass., Washington D. C., Philadelphia, Pa., and Hartford, Conn., of what has been called materialization of spirits; that I have led people to believe, and have represented, that the forms exhibited at these exhibitions were the spirits of their departed friends. But I now declare that said representations were false in every nature; that the material used for said representations was a combination of thin white lawn or tulle, and luminous paint, and the voices of said pretended spirits were simply representations of my own vocal power. And from this date henceforth to the end of the world I shall desist from any further exhibitions; and furthermore the deponent saith not.

EUGENE BESTE.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 7th day of October, A. D., 1885.

SIDNEY E. CLARKE, *Notary Public*.

WITNESSES:

Joseph H. Barnum, W. O. Burr, Herbert S. Rankin, F. H. Chapman, James T. McManus.

On Mrs. Beste's moccasins were her diamond earrings, put there to sparkle in the phosphorescent light. Her four diamond rings she placed in her slippers for safety. All of these and all of her property were returned to her.

There are hundreds of thousands of spiritualists in this country, and too many of them, anxious to hear from their departed friends, eagerly fall into the traps and contrivances of the frauds who give seances and exhibitions at the rate of a dollar each for admission. These frauds deserve severe punishment. Mrs. Beste might have been arrested for her fraudulent practices last evening. But no policeman was present, and she left within an hour for the depot and took the 2.56 train for Washington, where she has relatives. Her exposure was brought about by the shrewd arrangements of three ladies, who were backed by Mrs. House and a publisher of the *Times*, who rendered them material aid, and informed them where they could get two ready and stout men to grab the fraud and expose her imposture.

The \$20 paid by the spectators last evening were divided between these two men, by unanimous consent of those who had paid their money, and in the end had got their money's worth,—and even more,—the just exposure of an arrant humbug and impostor.

Being asked by the *Herald* representative what followed the exposure, Mrs. McManus is reported to have replied:

"Great excitement, every one pressing forward and fully recognizing Mrs. Beste, who grew ashen white under her powdered face. It was a pitiful, humiliating sight. She had removed her velvet dress, and left it behind the curtain together with her slippers, in one of which she had left her four diamond rings. She wore, as 'Nettie,' a long white gauze drapery over her white underwear, as giving better effects than over her dark dress. This gauze was saturated with a chemical preparation which gave it a pale, white, supernatural light. At intervals upon it were small spots of luminous paint, which, in the darkness, resembled pale stars. On the toes of each of the soft moccasins she wore she had placed one of her diamond earrings, which glistened in the faint light. The whole effect of the costume in the darkness



of the seance was wierd and beautiful. In the lamplight the costume was tawdry, dingy and ridiculous."

"Did she confess the fraud?" asked the *Herald* man.

"She confessed everything. She said she had done the same tricks when in Boston, and during her season this summer at Onset Bay, and admitted that other materializing mediums in Boston are operating with the same tricks."

"The gauze drapery," continues the *Herald*, "in which the woman enveloped herself, has been divided among the parties at the seance for mementoes. It is strongly scented with sandal wood, whose odor had been noticed during the evening. The chemical composition which illuminated the material was probably phosphorus and ether. A box of this preparation was found behind the curtains where she had arrayed herself. A very material aid in her deception was the wide range of her vocal abilities. In personating the various spirit forms, she sang in tones from mezzo-soprano to a heavy bass with apparent ease."

A small portion of the "spirit" drapery worn by Mrs. Beste has been sent to the *Journal* office by Mr. Miller. Looking at it and then at the descriptions given by Wetherbee, Lyman and others, the observer cannot have increased respect for the judgment of these witnesses, however much he may wonder at their stimulated imaginations and brilliant descriptive powers. That this woman could for years pursue her career, involving in her meshes many excellent people and deceiving thousands, is almost incredible. But when it is recalled that she had already been exposed several years ago in Philadelphia, and that many of her dupes, as well as the *Banner of Light*, had the best of evidence that the woman was dishonest, the perverse fatuity of her followers becomes absolutely sickening.

[FROM BOSTON POST.]

### CLOTHING OF SPIRITS.

A LIVELY TIME AT AN EAST BOSTON SEANCE, GIVEN BY MRS. BLISS.

There was another alleged spiritual seance Wednesday evening at the residence of Samuel S. Goodwin, 100 Meridian St., East Boston. The faithful assembled about 7.30 o'clock, and formed in the magic circle which is always necessary to bring up the "spirits." Unfortunately, the house was divided against itself; in other words, there were those present who, although spiritualists in belief, do not believe in the materialization part of the business. Those who were conducting the seance, however, did not know that the little circle contained "wolves in sheep's clothing." The room where the affair took place is on the second floor, and if appearances go for anything it is devoted for that purpose more than to anything else. A large picture of the great Aztec chief, Montezuma, adorns one side of the room, while a caricature of Marie Antoinette ornaments another wall. The cabinet was situated in one corner of the room, and in another part was a piano, which furnishes the usual quantity of doleful music. The performance of the evening was in accordance with the following advertisement, which appears in the *Banner of Light*:

MRS. C. B. BLISS,

Seances every Wednesday evening at 8 o'clock, at 100 Meridian St., East Boston.

Permanent residence, 70 Hillman St., New Bedford, Mass.

Mrs. Bliss is a stout, dark woman. She appears as Montezuma, though she is only about five feet high. This time it was Billy the bootblack's turn to

come out, and he did. It was announced that he wished to speak to an elderly gentleman. The gentleman approached and clasped the cold, clammy hand of the bootblack's spirit, but instead of shaking the hand and letting it go, he held it, and, at a signal, the lights were turned up, exposing the form of Mrs. Bliss, who was attired in a thin suit of clothes supposed to be fashionable with bootblacks. Quite a scuffle followed, and Mrs. Bliss was in a fair way to get the best of the old man when others interfered, and they were separated. A scene of confusion and disorder followed. The wolves in sheep's clothing secured a lot of paraphernalia which had been used by Montezuma, Marie Antoinette and the bootblack. Mr. Goodwin, the landlord, was not to be thus baffled without showing his authority. He accordingly locked the door and refused to let anybody out until the wardrobe of the spirits had been delivered up. The contest had every appearance of being a draw when it was suggested that the police be sent for. Accordingly two officers from station 7 were called, and the confiscated property was turned over to their keeping, as Mr. Goodwin claimed that it did not belong to him, but to the spirits; as they were not present to assert their rights, the officers took charge of it until their rights could be tried in court. This settled the matter, the doors were unlocked, and the imprisoned party were allowed to march out once more into the open air.

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[Pittsburg Commercial Gazette.]

#### MEDIUM BLISS.

SHE IS THOROUGHLY EXPOSED BY AN INGENIOUS CONTRIVANCE. AN IRON GATE IS EMPLOYED. IT SHOOTS UP FROM THE CELLAR AND UPSETS THE SPIRIT OF MISS ALICE BROOKS AN INDEPENDENT MATERIALIZATION—NO SIGHT FOR MORTAL EYES—THE EXPOSE.

"Stand back! It is no sight for mortal eyes," shouted the strong man who guards the cabinet of that spiritualistic wonder, Mrs. Bliss, the medium. The command was addressed to a young man who was forcing his way to where the spirit of Miss Alice Brooks, of Boston, was lying on the floor. The young man threw the guard to one side, and, helping the prostrate spirit to her feet, showed to the astonished audience Mrs. Bliss. She was not arrayed in her usual black silk, but wore white undergarments, and her face and shoulders were heavily powdered.

The scene occurred at a house on Franklin Street, Allegheny, only a few doors below the place where Mrs. Bliss is accustomed to call from the unknown certain spirits over whom she is supposed to have control. It was Monday night and everything had been made ready for an expose. The lady of the house was to turn on the gas at a certain signal, and at the same time an ingenious arrangement under the floor was to be worked. The two other persons in the scheme were young men who didn't believe in materialization, and had been dared by Mrs. Bliss to expose her if they could.

#### INGENIOUS MECHANISM.

Mrs. Bliss had been given the use of the parlor and dining-room in this house. In the parlor the audience was seated. The dining-room was turned over to the medium, and a few feet from the door opening into the parlor a



clothes-horse was placed and covered with shawls. Behind this stood the cabinet in which the wonderful manifestations took place.

The plan for the expose was an ingenious one. A small place was sawed out of the parlor floor in front of the door opening into the dining-room. It was as long as the door was wide, but only an inch or two in width. Down in the cellar an iron gate had been arranged. It hung on springs, and when the signal was given could be shot up through the opening of the floor, which was seemingly undisturbed. The gate was about three feet high, and the intention was to shut off all chance of the spirit escaping to the cabinet again. This gate was to be worked by one of the young men, who remained in the cellar for that purpose. In the parlor, in the corner furthest from the cabinet, the second young man was stationed. He was to give the signal for action just as soon as the spirit stepped across the fatal strip into the parlor.

#### THE SEANCE BEGINS.

The seance began. A great many spirits made their appearance. Spirits of all kinds, big and little, fat and lean, but all possessing that charming Spanish accent which distinguishes Mrs. Bliss from the average non-believing American. "Billy the boot-black" was among the first, and he had no sooner appeared than, peering into the dimly lighted parlor, he asked in spirit tones:

"Is Mr. — there?"

The young man in the corner, who was to give the signal, answered that he was.

"I'm sorry you're there then, because you scoff at me."

"Billy" was followed by "Blue Flower," "Daisy," "Lucille Western" and others of the stock usually displayed on such occasions by the medium. These denizens of an unknown world went through their regulation performances, bringing messages from dead friends and causing some of the faithful who were present to almost weep from joy.

#### THE EXPOSE.

Finally the spirit of Miss Alice Brooks appeared. The conspirators had been waiting for her. She is one of the medium's best materializations. She is, as Mrs. Bliss once said, an independent materialization, or one with which she had no connection. The young man in the corner watched her anxiously. At last she seemed to step across the slip. The signal was given, the iron gate flew up, and the lights were turned on.

The spirit of Miss Alice Brooks lay on the floor. Instead of being across the slip when the cord was pulled, she was standing over it. The force of the gate springing up was sufficient to throw her off her feet, and they went skyward as she fell to the floor with a noise and shock that proved conclusively that the spirit was flesh and blood. It was then the young man from the corner made the rush, threw the guard out of the way, and raising the spirit of Miss Brooks he introduced Mrs. Bliss.

Mrs. Bliss did not attempt to defend herself in any way only to denounce it as a dastardly trick. She afterwards called the young man to her cabinet and said:



"Well, it looks like you were a little ahead."

The expose was so successful that the believers who were present admitted the fact.

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[From a Correspondent of the *ALCYONE*.]

Concerning spirit messages, a new and rather dangerous form of this method of communication has appeared. When A. S. Hayward recently passed to the spirit life, his friends paid him the tribute of high and sincere praise. But it seems that one of your correspondents sent you some ill-natured words of disparagement, insinuation that the eulogies lavished on the departed Hayward were perhaps a little hypo-critical, as "he had a fault or two."\* But Hayward's spirit was not content to let his friends rest under such an aspersion. He therefore "stepped in," as he said, at a *Banner of Light* circle, and told one of his friends to look in your journal to see "the work of a sorehead." It is to be feared that such compliments as these passing and repassing between the dwellers on the earth plane and their friends on the other side, will not conduce to good feeling here or to due progress there.

But now, more surprising than all, a puzzling problem has been raised, involving a startling conflict for the possession of a mighty Indian spirit. The late "Dr." James A. Bliss, so highly honored and eulogized by the *Banner of Light*, died, claiming the exclusive ownership of the spirit of "Blackfoot." But the "Dr." has hardly begun his development on the other shore when a number of mediums put in claims to the ownership of this same spirit.

I heard "Dr." Abby K. M. Heath, in her Dwight Hall spiritual meeting, solemnly affirm that Blackfoot appeared to her the morning after Dr. Bliss passed on, and offered himself to her, distinctly pledging himself to assist her exclusively in all healing work.

Next Mrs. C. B. Bliss rises to say in the *Banner of Light* that Blackfoot will continue to do his work through her mediumship. This Mrs. Bliss was a close partner with the lamented James A. in materialization.

A still stronger claim appears in the *Banner*, put in by Mrs. Cora L. Bliss, who claims to be the "lawful and loved wife, and duly appointed successor of the 'Dr.' with whom he lived harmoniously in the mortal life, and with whom he works in the spirit life." It appears that Blackfoot manufactures magnetized brown paper, for healing purposes, for both the Blissesses; but it seems that Cora is his favorite, for he allows her to sell it at fifty cents a package, while C. B. cannot afford it at less than \$1.

There is still another Mrs. Bliss, who has not been heard from. If she prefers a claim to Blackfoot, that swells the number to four; and that powerful spirit must be agile enough if he can make himself the exclusive possession of each of these female mediums, and at the same time.

It is known that each medium has her own special Indian spirit, and no medium has ever before claimed that of another. Can it be possible that Blackfoot is an artful deceiver, and has made his vows to each, making each believe he was "her very own?"

The following letter from Mrs. Bliss to Mr. Braman is printed verbatim, including spelling. The "old wretch, reprobate, and vagabond's" offence was in shaking hands with her popular spirit, "Billy, the Bootblack," with

\*W. J. Fletcher.

his consent, and not letting go until "Billy" was transfigured into the plump form of Mrs. Bliss in a fully lighted room. The result was, "Billy" lost his bosom piece ("rag"), and several of the renowned departed of past ages their "spirit robes."

[COPY]

SUNDAY EVENING.

MR. BRAMAN:

it may please you to informe the old reprobate that I, met at your Office, that last evening a party of 23. surprise me with a seance and a purse, and tonight a party of 31 wellcome my guides and Bill. tell the old Vagabond wrech that I, defy him and his corrupt doings. the rag that he show at your office, I, have no doubt that he woret himself and they toket to the seances to lie afterwards, he the wrech spoke of the Rose's, tell where he is now "I mean the Vagabond" poor misirable old man he is in his last legs. you son I, am told made one of the party who assaulted a Laddy god in his mercy pity him, what an honor to is country an ornament to sosity he is an hero to be put in history of is country. in public dragging a woman by force from her private apartment and assault her. Oh son of a woman???? how she must bless you for your brave deeds. the end of such ends bravely with a rope tell this ornament that the above woman as a father to whom we you and the old wrech will meet before mony day and then he will pay back the compliment in Spanish fashion. . . . .

if he not then I, will I, know the old wrech fear me the other day he did not dare to aproch me for heaven only knows where we, I, woud been tonight well I, will sign my self

Remember even if latter on

"myself" am no coward  
dont forget that

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W. E. COLEMAN, IN THE "CARRIER DOVE."

In a letter from Horatio Eddy, dated Chittenden, Vt., July 29, 1873, published in the Boston *Investigator* a short time afterward, he declared Mrs. Huntoon a thorough fraud. He also spoke of his brother William as "no better than she is, and a thorough exposure of their tricks would be just and right." Mrs. Huntoon was detected in fraudulent materialization at Webster, Mass., by Mrs. Margaret Flint, and also at Lake Pleasant spiritual camp-meeting, August 25, 1878; that Horatio Eddy had just written him a letter in which he states that he had never seen a materialized spirit in his whole life. As Horatio was a materialized medium himself, and as he had seen hundreds of purported materialized spirits at his brother William's seances at Chittenden, his assertion is tantamount to saying that all of the phenomena occurring through his alleged mediumship, as described in Olcott's "People from the Other World," were frauds. I have information, also, that on one occasion he palmed off a common "Evangeline" print, touched up a little, as a genuine spirit picture of a visitant's daughter. It is a well-known fact that William and Mrs. Huntoon traveled together at one time, giving performances exposing spiritualism, and showing how he and Mary had humbugged the people in their so-called spiritual seances.

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[FROM BOSTON INVESTIGATOR.]

MR. EDITOR:—Some time ago it became my lot to detect Mrs. Huntoon, of Chittenden, (Vt.) in the act of playing a very mean and shabby trick upon us—she pretending to materialize the spirit of my mother. Some twenty of our town's-people gathered at our house to witness the performance, and all but



four spiritualists were more than convinced that Mrs. Huntoon was fairly caught offering her own hand to me at the opening of the curtain. At Worcester (Mass.), she had just played herself off upon Dr. Kelley as the spirit of his departed wife, but at Webster she was not as successful, which gave great annoyance to the leading spiritualists here. Since her exposure here, there has been no end or limit to the slander and abuse that has been heaped upon my husband and myself in both business and social relations. Now, after sitting under this load of abuse without much hope of better "conditions" in the future, I have this day, very unexpectedly, received a letter from Mrs. Huntoon's brother, Horatio G. Eddy, a man whom I have never seen. I here present his letter to you for publication, providing it meets your approval.

MARGARET FLINT.

Webster (Mass.), Aug. 2, 1878.

CHITTENDEN (VT.), July 29, 1878.

MRS. FLINT :

Although an entire stranger to you, allow me to write you a few lines in regard to Mrs. Huntoon, my sister. When she was at your place I believed her then to be an honest medium, and the story she told on her arrival of her abuse by you. Then I had some sympathy for her. But since that time I have become fully satisfied she was thoroughly exposed in some of her meanness at your place, and when I found all her statements were false concerning you and your family, I informed her of it. Since that time she has tried many plots to ruin me. One in last September. She and her husband, who is one of the biggest scoundrels that ever run, went to the State Attorney and entered a complaint against me for an assault upon them with intent to kill, and the result was, that by her and her false swearing I am bound over to this coming September Court for trial, which is one of the vilest games that could be got up, and all for a revengeful purpose.

Now she and her husband, I learn, are going to Lake Pleasant Camp meeting to defraud the people there, and get money to carry out some of their fiendish plans. If she could be thoroughly exposed there in one of her first seances, and arrested for obtaining money under false pretences, it would put an end to her career in that line, and as you have become aware that she is a fraud, you could do it easier than anyone else. Her brother, Wm. Eddy, may be with her ; if so, he is not better than she is, and a thorough exposure of their tricks would be just and right. She has told many stories in regard to your character which I have found to be false, and if I am her brother, I will say to you that she is one of the meanest persons that ever existed, and her husband is just as mean as she is—nothing too mean for them to do for a dollar ; and as friend to you for showing them up in the past, I would inquire if there is not some way they can be brought to justice? I should like to have a long talk with you, but as I am situated I shall have to give it up. Could you send me the letter that was published in the Boston paper by you, where she claimed her arm was broken? It may be of some use for me in the coming trial—showing she was a liar. Anything you can do to help me in my trouble by her false complaint, will 'n the future be made up by me if possible.

HORATIO G. EDDY.

I hereby certify that the above is a true copy-attest : sworn to before me, this second day of August, 1878.

WM. H. DAVIS,

*Associate Justice of the 1st District Court of Southern Worcester.*

[FROM THE RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL.]

### CHARACTER OF A CAMP MANAGER.

TO THE EDITOR. — For a dozen years or more the *Banner of Light* has been advertising, endorsing, and commending a person in this city who has figured as a seance manager, developer of mediums, and magnetic healer. It is time



the spiritualists should understand that this man is a charlatan ; that George T. Albro is disreputable in character, a trickster in seances, a deceiver in his pretensions, and is destitute of all claims to the respect and confidence of spiritualists. It is the infirmity of the *Banner of Light* that it always seems ready to countenance and support every imposter that infests spiritualistic circles. I will not attempt to count the number of cheats over whom it has cast its protecting and patronizing wing, who have been driven out by exposure. Last year it was praising a swindler by the name of W. R. Colby; but a daily paper showed by quoting extensively from the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* what he was, and he was forced to quit the city. Yet the *Banner* never made the slightest apology for attempting to force a convicted scoundrel on the confidence of spiritualists. And now, Mr. Editor, we turn to you, because you have done heroic service in cleaning out frauds, and will not, we hope, fail us in this emergency.

George T. Albro first set up in the pseudo-spirit show business in partnership with the two Berry sisters, holding materializing seances for raising spirits in "full forms." He prospered in this till some naughty newspaper men invaded his seances, and on two or three occasions seized the "spirits" and found them to be full forms of flesh and blood. When these "spirits" broke from the embraces of their captors they left some portion of their vestments, which were deposited in the "Museum of Bogus Ghosts' Drapery," where there was already a large collection of similar habiliments, and from which Albro never attempted to reclaim them. Suddenly, last autumn, Albro ceased to advertise his exhibitions in a dark room, of "full forms." Nevertheless, it is known that he has continued his dark seances, with the aid of the sickly fraud Hattie Stafford and her mother, as confederates. But these are open only to a select and faithful few, who blindly cling to a fraud so often exposed, and for whose delight he will consent to raise the dead for the meagre consideration of one dollar admission each.

Albro has also given his attention to the "development of mediumship." He practised this in a dark cabinet, where he manipulated his subjects till they exhibited the requisite "power." His customers were mostly poor women, who were made to believe that he could put them in the way of making an easy living. But the most of these were disappointed. The "power" did not develop, and, declining further instruction, they departed with nothing in return for the money they had paid him, except that they were both wiser and sadder than when they began. Two of his disciples, however, became famous. They were the Cowans, whose subsequent exposure was complete when the confession of their leading confederate was published, and when the trap doors in their house were discovered. By this ingenious contrivance the "spirits" could pass under the floor from an adjoining room, to the cabinet, and back again, without being perceived. It is suspected that for the glory of this achievement they were indebted to a suggestion from Albro.

This is the way to develop mediumship with Albro's magnetized paper: Sit in a dark room, hold the paper in the hands for twenty minutes, then rub it across the forehead, and lay it on the floor beside your chair. But it would be more convenient if the nascent medium could take the paper to bed with him, hold it in his hands till the approach of sleep, and then lay it on his pillow, so all night long he might be absorbing the "vitalized forces," and hastening

his development. This would not try his patience so much as to sit in a dark room for twenty minutes, with nothing to think of, and with nothing but a half-cent's worth of brown paper in his hands. Or, why could not Albro magnetize a little tin rattle? Surely, the searcher for the "essence of life," under the conditions prescribed, must be in that infantile state of mind which would find amusement in a rattle.

When we turn from Albro's pretensions to his character, the sense of humor gives place to grief and indignation. The records of the divorce court tell a shameful story. A young and artless orphan girl is sought by a man in middle life. Knowing nothing of his previous conduct, she yields to his persuasions, and is enticed into marrying him. On the wedding day, under the pretence of borrowing, he robs her of her money; not a large amount—a hundred or two dollars—but it was her hard-earned savings, and it was her all. He then begins a system of inhuman abuse. By threats, by insults, by choking her, by dragging her around by the hair, he makes her life a torment. It is impossible for her to endure this, and he drives her away from home to become a mother. Penniless and destitute, an orphan without friends, she is left to confront her troubles alone. The child dies, and a woman, still young in years, is now struggling for her scanty bread under all the sorrows of a blighted life. The villain, so brutal to his wife, so insensible to the claims of his offspring, is George T. Albro. The wife, who in her great strait repeatedly appealed to him for some portion of the money he had taken from her, but always in vain—the wife who was hurried into marriage only to be alienated by brutal abuse—could find no relief except in divorce. And there stands the record—for "extreme cruelty and neglect." This is the man who deals out the "essences of life" in brown paper.

Nor is this all. A woman in another city was an earlier victim of this man's villainy. She, too, was driven to seek divorce with a burden of blighted affections, and two of his children to care for and support. And such is Albro, the "well-known Boston spiritualist," as the *Banner* delights to call him. He is just now running a camp meeting in Rindge, New Hampshire, which he calls the "Banner Camp," in compliment to the organ which has puffed him so well.

This man continues to reveal his nature in every appropriate situation. He was at the Onset Camp last August, with female assistants, holding materializing seances. At that camp a young girl and her father, who came from a distant rural town, assisted at certain hours in a large restaurant where Albro and his confederates were in the habit of taking their meals. Albro soon began to pay tender attentions to this young woman, and show great politeness to her father, giving them free admission to his "show," as he termed it. This girl, though inexperienced, was observant, willing to learn, but not to be captivated by fraud. She was astounded, therefore, in going to Albro's seances, to detect in the "spirits" he raised the same beauties who came to the table with eager orders for "roast beef, rare, with all the vegetables." She could not believe that such was the proper diet for spirits. Albro, nevertheless, pressed his suit, and offered to "love and cherish" this innocent country maiden; but, though he owned to her father that the whole business of materializing the dead was fraudulent, and declared his intention to abandon it, she had the sense to decline the honor of his hand, and thus escaped the pangs of prospective divorce.



[FROM ADVERTISEMENT IN BANNER OF LIGHT.]

## ALBRO'S MAGNETIZED PAPER,

Containing vitalized forces for the healing of the sick and the development of mediumship.

Magnetized Paper is no new method by which the essences of life are conveyed to the people. Still the theory of its conveyance is little understood.

Thoughts and desires are a substantial entity.

Vitality, born of Magnetism and Electric Currents, is also an atomized substance. Therefore all these being substances, paper can be thoroughly saturated or imbued with them.

Having been before the public for many years in the interest of Mediumship, and especially successful in developing mediums into some of its highest phases, he has found it quite impossible to reach the many who wish his *personal* attention. Therefore he has given the study of magnetizing paper his closest attention, that he might reach the thousands who desire the development of their powers, and he is confident that the best results can be obtained with all who have these hidden forces and use the paper according to directions.

Mr. Albro's success in the development of mediumship in the past is a sufficient guarantee of the magnetic power contained in his paper. Price of Magnetized Paper is One Dollar per package. Enclose money or postal note. Write your name and address plainly. Address

G. T. ALBRO,  
55 Rutland Street, Boston, Mass.

[FROM BOSTON TRAVELLER.]

### THE PROCESS IN DETAIL.

Contained in the package was the following:

Directions for Using Albro's Magnetized Paper.—In using this paper for assisting the spirit forces to develop your mediumistic power, you must hold two or three sheets in either hand for 10 or 15 minutes, occasionally passing them across your temple and forehead, after which place the paper on the carpet or floor near your chair. One of the most important factors to observe is to have your surroundings quiet, and if you can partially darken your room for the first few months of sitting, it will assist you very much in your development.

After a few sittings you will notice small ethereal lights about you, which will increase in size at each sitting; very slow at first, but more rapidly as your powers increase. At times, instead of lights, you hear slight sounds, as the tapping of fingers on the table, floor or wall. Again you feel the faint touch of spirit fingers. Each of these denote progress in your development. After a time you will be able to converse with them by calling the letters of the alphabet, getting a response when the right letter is spoken.

At this stage of your development you can generally receive instruction from your guides. Should you wish, however, to consult me, write plainly your wishes, and progress you have made, enclosing two three-cent stamps for reply. Address George T. Albro, No. 55 Rutland Street, Boston, Mass.

### BAD NEWS FROM CINCINNATI.

Mr. Bario then read a letter sent to the postmaster at Cincinnati, and written by one W. M. Culshaw of that city, in which the writer informed the



postmaster that Albro was "a well-known swindler in Boston," and made other charges against the doctor, the reverse of complimentary.

On cross-examination Mr. Bario testified that he had not tested the paper, and that for all he knew it might have all the qualities claimed for it. He also admitted that in his conversations with the doctor, the latter gave no indications of disbelieving in his so-called invention.

Inspector Charles H. Pendleton testified that he accompanied Dr. Bario when the latter called on the doctor, and that the latter said at that interview that he had succeeded very well in developing mediumistic powers through the use of the paper.

Frank T. Waterhouse, a paperdealer for 18 years, testified that paper like that sent out by the defendant would be worth at wholesale about 6 cents a pound; that the sample submitted weighed about two ounces, (weighing it on a pair of scales); he did not think the sheets submitted had been manipulated by hand.

#### GOOD FOR LA GRIPPE.

This closed the government's case, and the defence called several witnesses, Mr. Stockbridge saying that he wished to refute "the outrageous and libellous statements in the letter written by the crank in Cincinnati." The commissioner said that it was not necessary to do this as the letter had no weight with the court.

Mrs. Abbie Ripley was then called to testify as one who had been benefited by the magnetized paper. She testified: "I am familiar with the paper; some time ago I had great trouble with my lungs, after the grip; I sent to Dr. Albro and got him to magnetize some paper. He sent me some. I put it on my lungs, and experienced immediate relief; there is a warmth and glow to the paper and a tingling sensation."

On cross-examination Mrs. Ripley testified that she lived at 55 Rutland Street; that she leased of the doctor, and he sometimes boarded with her. She also testified that although not a medium, she had practised the laying on of hands and been successful. She thought, however, that better results were obtained from the use of the paper than from the laying on of hands. The paper after being used was valueless. Mrs. Ripley had great faith in the paper, saying that once when she had been badly injured by falling downstairs, she found relief in its application. The doctor did not sell much, she said; because it took a great while to magnetize the paper, and "greatly depleted" the doctor; she knew he did not sell much, "because he said so."

Mrs. May Wyatt Fisher of Chelsea testified that she had used Dr. Albro's paper for sciatic rheumatism, and for a cough which followed an attack of the grip; it worked well; the pain "throbbed away," she said; she believed it was the paper that did it.

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"I, Mrs. S., of Haverhill, being duly sworn, depose and testify: In the year 1886 I had become acquainted with George T. Albro, of Boston, from attending his materializing seances for some eighteen months, and having read his advertisement in the *Banner of Light* that he developed mediums, I sought an interview with him at 55 Rutland Street, Boston. Mr. Albro told me at that interview that he could tell me in a few sittings whether he could develop me

into a medium ; but it must be a business affair, for which I must pay one dollar for each sitting, as soon as it was over. I commenced in November, 1886, with my sittings, and for the first few times Mr. Albro went into the cabinet with me, and lights and raps were frequently produced. At the next sitting a spirit came to me who had come to me many times before, at the materializing seances of the Berry sisters, under the charge of Mr. Albro, where he was called 'Harry.' I sat in the cabinet with this 'Harry' in the dark, and while sitting so, 'Harry' told me that he was not wholly made up, and that he had no lower limbs, for the reason that it would draw too much from me. This 'Harry' took control of the whole business, telling me that I was coming out a wonderful medium, and that I would have no difficulty in getting a handsome living by my mediumship by using my powers for only a few months in the year. I spoke to Mr. Albro about my prospects, and he told me that my progress was wonderful, and that the spirits materialized quicker than they did with the Berry sisters after they had sat for a year.

"One morning when I went into the cabinet for the sitting 'Harry' materialized immediately, as usual, and told me that I was nervous, and that a spirit doctor was coming to give me treatment. 'Harry' then disappeared, and the promised doctor came very soon after. The doctor began making passes over me, and talking about my wearing corsets when I should give public seances, and during this time he took undue liberties with my person, remarking, 'You don't care, so long as it is necessary.' He put his hand under my clothes, and when I told him that I did not think that was necessary, he said, 'Yes, it is ; every part of your person must be magnetized if you wish to come out as a medium.' Believing that I was dealing with a spirit, I thought his conduct strange, and asked him, 'Doctor, are you fully materialized at this moment?'"\* . . . . .

"The darkness in the cabinet prevented me from seeing the features of these so-called 'spirits' ; but from the similarity in the tones of voice and the general actions, I have no doubt now that 'Harry' and the 'Doctor' were the same person ; i. e., Mr. Dick Johnson, the husband of Gertrude Berry.

"Having expended about all my ready money, I began to be anxious as to how I should be able to go on with my sittings. 'Harry' said that it was all right, and that I must not worry ; and asked me if I had not articles that I could turn into money. I told him that I had some silk dress patterns, and afterwards Mr. Albro asked to see my dress patterns, saying that he could assist me in finding a customer. Before that, 'Harry' had told me several times in the cabinet that if I could raise the money to take a number of additional sittings, I should be able to come out as a first-class medium. At last he named fifteen dollars as required, and I carried my dress patterns to Mr. Albro, and he said that he would help me as a favor, and he allowed me eight dollars for one pattern, which was about half its cost. Afterwards I carried two more dress patterns to him, and he told me that they were not nice enough, and that he did not care for them. I told him that I had no money left and

\* A considerable portion of this affidavit is omitted as unfit for publication. The victim very naturally objects, after such an experience, to publishing her name. If any one doubts its genuineness, they are at liberty to call at the office of Henry W. Holland, Esq., 27 Tremont Row, and inspect for themselves.



owed him two dollars and a quarter, and could not take another sitting. Mr. Albro said that as long as I was there, I could go on that day, but that he kept no books. I entered the cabinet, and 'Harry' came in as usual, and said that I must give up another dress pattern for the three dollars and a quarter that I should owe. I said that I did not feel able to sacrifice so much on my dresses, and he said, "What do three or four dollars matter, when you will soon be making so much money?" At last I raised the fifteen dollars, but when that was used up in the sittings, 'Harry' told me that there were drawbacks, and that I should not be able to be a medium. Then I burst out crying in the cabinet, and Mr. Albro asked me what was the matter, and I told him what Harry had just told me. Mr. Albro seemed indifferent about it, and 'Harry' advised me to seek a room, and have a cabinet and some one to help me materialize, and go right ahead; but I did not feel that I could.

"I have been for many years a spiritualist. My friends have passed away, and the belief that they could return was a great comfort to me. In my blind faith I accepted what was told me for the sacred truth; but my business was sacrificed and my last money spent on a fraud, and now I feel that it is my duty to acknowledge it to protect others. I have had nothing to do with Mr. Albro and his confederates since my eyes were opened.

"MRS. S."

Sworn to and subscribed before me, this 20th day of March, 1889.

HENRY W. HOLLAND,

*Justice of the Peace.*

LETTER FROM ONSET TO THE RELIGIO PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL, GIVING AN ACCOUNT OF A SEANCE BY THE BERRY SISTERS, WHO WERE DEVELOPED AND MANAGED BY GEO. T. ALBRO.

Among the mediums upon these grounds at present, are two young ladies from Boston, by name of Berry, with their manager. One of these Misses gives materializing seances, and the other sits for what she terms "physical manifestations," which consist in the ringing of bells and floating and playing on musical instruments, writing, supposed to be by spirit hand, on slates and paper, fanning the circle which is gathered around a long table, touching, and patting, and kissing and whispering names and communications to the same, and making lights and purporting to resolve these into faces, though I could see no similitude to a face even when such was several times recognized by members of the circle.

The "physical" Miss Berry commenced the exercises by placing herself in the middle of one side of the table, at which were present sixteen people, more or less. Her sister was not visible. The gentleman in charge of the affair takes position in an opposite part of the room from her, in order to prove to the circle that they are not in collusion. Sometimes, however, the power seems to extend so far that persons are touched upon his side of the room. All were strangers to me, if I except the lady who accompanied me, a gentleman from Chelsea, and Mrs. Ross, the materializing medium of Providence, R. I., whom I was very glad to find seated by my side, where she remained.

Miss Berry sat between two gentlemen, one of whom I understood to be an entire stranger; the other had sat with her a few times. Touches commenced



immediately upon putting out the light, and touching kisses were heard, for which thanks, if no more, were naturally returned by the gentlemen receiving them. The musical instruments performed, communications were written, and I think some were given orally; the light was lit, and the medium changed her seat, passing by two or three to do so. Then darkness, and more of the foregoing manifestations. Ex-Mayor Lowe, the gentleman from Chelsea, was seated at Mrs. Ross' right hand, and she at mine; as they had previously sat in this circle, Miss Berry passed them by, and came between Mrs. Ross and myself. I should have previously stated that Mr. Lowe was "touched" when the manager stood with his right hand on Mrs. Ross' right shoulder, and his left on mine, though the medium was across the table—touched upon the side or back of his head.

The most of the manifestations inclined to me, and to my left, and after the medium had taken her seat by me. We had been told to "keep the circuit of magnetism intact," etc.; "to follow the medium's hands if they were lifted, for she sat in test conditions between two who ought to hold her hands all the time." We were very crowded at our end of the table, which made everything that occurred very palpable to me. I suggested that the "conditions" would prove much more convenient for her if more space were left between sitters.

There was hardly room between Mrs. Ross and myself for the little delicate woman who now came in and laid her two hands, like two feathers, on our two hands. She did not allow me to hold her hand nor her little finger even, but coquettishly kept her little bird-claw dancing on top of my big one, and as soon as the light was out, her hands flitted so quickly and so high, that I could not follow the instructions "to hold on." In the dense darkness their locality was uncertain for a time. She had, however, previous to flitting, brought all four of our hands together in an indiscriminate huddle, and linked Mrs. Ross' little finger in mine, in the orthodox fashion. There was too much difference between the hands for me to be unconscious of what was going on, but there was nothing left for me but to "watch and pray," which I took care to fortify myself by doing thoroughly.

The little woman arose from my side, moving her chair back a bit toward Mrs. R., and passing behind me. They, of course, responded, thinking them genuine, for they had not followed her whole movements as I had. It would have been wise in me to have also acknowledged that I was "touched," but mine chiefly took effect upon my temper, which is not any too good when such bare-faced manifestations are attempted, and I kept quiet for fear I should say something. I kept my finger steadily and firmly around my next neighbor's, and reached back with my right foot covering the space where the little medium had just been sitting till I touched the leg of her empty chair, from whence the bird had flown—I had proof of this, both by feeling her arise (she was crowded so near me) and move back of my chair, where I could follow every motion of hers—and, by then sweeping my foot around, and finding that she was out of her place. If I could ever affirm anything which I have seen take place in the light, I can just as truly affirm this which occurred in the dark. I realized everything just as acutely as if I saw all, and I know of what I speak.

While standing behind me and the neighbor at my left, the usual lights ap-

peared, which describe a semi-circle, as if bounding about upon a long elastic whalebone; though they sometimes sweep horizontally, nothing is done in this line which a whalebone could not be made to perform. The light came down in front of me; it was like a square block three inches by two and one-half, perhaps, which illuminated itself. There was no smell of phosphorus. One gentleman when it was brought to him, saw "a face so illuminated that he could see the color of her eyes." I lament to say I was not so blest. There was no face with my light, though I should not have been surprised had I seen one; it is as easy to have a face as a light.

After she had fooled round enough, she came carefully creeping back to her chair again, seated herself, and then tried to loosen our hands and take mine in her little bird-claw. But it was strange how closely I followed the previous instructions "not to release hold," and she pulled and pulled at my hand, until she was obliged to resort to a stratagem, which was really shrewd, in order to get possession. She said, "Why, maybe they want to shake hands with you, and if they do you can let go of my hand." The amazing effrontery, when it was Mrs. R's hand which I held. So I let go, and she, trusting not to be betrayed by my right-hand neighbor, said she would put her hand on my wrist so "they (the spirits) can shake hands with you," (me) and putting her left hand on my right wrist, she shook hands with me with her right, I easily feeling the cramped position of her hand as she sought to make it appear that the spirit "shaking" was before me. It was a bungling performance all through.

The usual intention is to have the chairs "comfortably placed," at a little distance from each other, ostensibly that the company may be cool. But my end of the table was very full, and only space between our chairs and the end of the room for a small person to pass, and when my neighbor moved even for this little Berry to come between us, it made the stowage splendid for night observations, because I could feel the medium full length, and know her "ways that were dark and tricks that were vain." It might be hoped that with the Berry-all of this fraudulent troupe, all other miserable imposters might hurry to place themselves in their common grave, and seek a merciful oblivion, hoping for no resurrection, but we seem doomed to be continually on the alert, and are called to exercise our reason on every phenomenon presented, and even at the seaside camping places to be obliged to hunt the bones from our fish before we are safe in swallowing the latter. Truth and untruth are considerably mixed, and must be thoroughly criticised.

Aug. 11, 1883.

LITA BARNEY SAYLES.

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[FROM THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE.]

### CREATING A SPOOK.

CONFESSION OF ARCHER, WHOM THE "TRIBUNE" EXPOSED. — NARROW ESCAPES FROM SKEPTICS.

Henry Archer, the materializing medium exposed last Sunday by reporters for the *Tribune*, has followed up his confession in open court that he is a fraud, by making a clean breast of his career as a spook-producer for the last ten years. Tuesday afternoon he was fined two hundred dollars by Justice Woodman for obtaining money under false pretences, and on condition that



he leave town in twenty-four hours the fine was suspended. The next day he took the train for Grand Rapids, Michigan, but before he scraped the mud of Chicago from his feet, spent three hours with the reporter who exposed him, and, without reserve, told the story of his life, how he became a medium, the prominent people who have been humbugged by him, and the dangers he has passed through while personating shades of all ages, sex, and nationalities.

"I was born in Georgia," said he, "and spent my early life in the Peanut State. When twelve years old I moved with my family to New York, and five years later commenced a theatrical career. I had a good voice then, and was a fair elocutionist. I made my debut on the Bowery, in a company headed by Zoe Gayton, the actress who recently gained some fame by trundling a wheelbarrow from San Francisco to New York. The play was 'Mazeppa,' and I was one of the wild, untamed Arabs of the desert. After a few months as 'supe' and general utility man, I played the part of the minister in a piece called 'Bertha, the Sewing-Machine Girl.' I put in several years with stock and traveling companies, and finally secured a good 'sit' at the Leland Opera House, in Albany, N. Y. We had a pretty good stock company, and during my time there I supported Booth, Barrett, McCullough, and a number of theatrical stars. I did not go by the name of Archer—that is assumed—and as I expect to enter the theatrical business again next year, having the promise of the stage managership of a good company, I prefer not to tell the name I went by then. Ten years ago I went to California with a company that 'busted' in San Francisco, and, to add trouble to my troubled state, I lost my voice. It was a powerful bass in its halcyon days; now it is not worth a cent. I blame the man who taught me elocution for that. He taught me to use my throat without reference to the muscles of the chest, and at the outset put me to work on 'The Merchant of Venice,' a piece fraught with more trouble for the budding elocutionist than any other.

"Well, I was in pretty tough luck when that show went to pieces, and I did not know in what direction to turn. While wandering around the city one day I heard of a camp-meeting of spiritualists. I went out there just to pass the time away, and saw the first seance of my life. Some woman who was giving tests told me that if I sat for development I would make a great medium, and incidentally make a great deal of money. I didn't care about the mediumistic qualities concealed in and about my person, but I did want money; so I sat for development."

"Of what does sitting for development consist? Why, the sucker sits in front of the medium, clasps hands, and, like Bertie, the Lamb, and his confreres in the club, 'they sit there, and sit there, and sit there,' until some of the medium's power passes to the sitter."

"How much does this development cost?"

Archer smiled a bland-like smile, and answered:

"It all depends on the size of a man's pile. But it didn't cost me anything," he continued. "I was young and pretty fresh those days, and so I got developed for nothing. I first turned my attention to clairvoyancy, and, honest, I had good success with it. You may think I'm lying, but it's a fact that I have clairvoyant power. I had wonderful results in this line, and my success nearly led to my ruin. I made from ten to twenty-five dollars a day,



and spent it nearly all for drink. I became a besotted wretch, and one time was so despondent that I took morphine with suicidal intent, and came near entering the spirit world in earnest. I firmly believe that evil spirits hover around a man, and try to ruin him. My evil spirit is drink, and my good spirit proved to be my wife, who lifted me from the gutter and made a man of me. During the two years I practised clairvoyancy I was visited by the best people in San Francisco. The work was a little hard — wearing on the brain — and so I quit it.

“I was thrown into contact with a number of materializing mediums, and as they told me there was a mint of money in the business, I made up my mind to enter it.”

“Did you take lessons from the mediums?”

Again a smile, and the answer:

“No, it wasn’t necessary. I attended several seances, my eyesight was good, and I always had a seat near the cabinet.”

Then Archer smiled once more.

“At the outset of my materializing career I was well acquainted with Mrs. Josie Hoffman, the most notorious spook priestess of that time. Josie’s glory was at its zenith when I attended her seances, and spirits were shy when she did not produce three or four at one and the same time. And they were all good-looking females, too. But when Josie thought her greatness was a-ripening, there came a chilling frost in the shape of skeptics, who grabbed three entrancing shades one evening, and found them to be flesh and blood. They also found a trap-door in the cabinet. That made me a little careful, and I journeyed around the State until the excitement died down a little in San Francisco.”

“Does it cost much to equip a ‘spook factory’ with a full supply of wigs, whiskers, and other ghostly paraphernalia?”

“Not very much. But we did the business differently in California. If you had grabbed your sister ‘Alice’ there, you would not have pulled her hair and bangs off, as you did from me. It was the genuine article. If you had only waited a week longer, you would have had a much better story, and you would have had a female for your sister, instead of this unfortunate fellow who is talking to you. I had all arrangements made to produce any given number of spirits at the same moment, when you ‘busted my game.’

“How do we do this without the aid of a trap-door? Why, it’s just as easy to fix a dummy in a chair as it is to fix one in the cabinet. You can do lots of things close to the cabinet curtains when the lights are dim and low; and then, ninety per cent. of the sitters see the spirits just as the medium wants them to. For instance, suppose an assistant says, ‘This is a very tail spirit,’ and even if the form is in reality no larger than the one that immediately preceded it, the chances are that a chorus of ‘isn’t it!’ will come from the guileless spectators. Of course, I have to do a good deal of contortion, but when I am in an uncomfortable position I do not stay out long. When the circle is composed almost entirely of spiritualists I am not afraid of being detected. They respect the phenomena; but the ‘grabbing skeptic’ is the individual of whom I always want to fight shy. I’ve been grabbed lots of times, but was never caught ‘dead to rights’ till Sunday.

“I suppose you have heard of the spiritualist camp-meeting at Onset Bay,

Mass., every summer. Well, that is the medium's harvest. Every year I have made more during the month I was in camp than during the other eleven months. But you have to be careful—very careful—there. Last summer I had a couple of distinguished visitors at my cottage. One was Joe Jefferson, the old man,—and that was his first or second visit, by the way,—and an athletic, hunting ex-president who has a cottage not very far from there. Who was he? Well you ought to know. It was Grover."

"Did you materialize a sister for Grover?"

"No," and here Archer indulged in a hearty laugh; "it was something more than that."

"Did he express any pleasure at the manifestation, or recognize the spirit you conjured up for him?"

"Well, they paid their money, laughed, and drove away, saying they would come again. You know spiritualists say that Mrs. Folsom, Grover's mother-in-law, is a believer in the science, and I know that Mr. Jefferson, Sr., is. I also gave a sitting to young Joe and his wife. Lord, how I did coin money there!

"But to return to California. I had a fairly easy time there. Of course, I was going through the mill, as we call it. I mean by that, the newspapers got after me, called me a fraud, printed lots of stuff about my seances, but I never had any serious trouble. I thought I had gotten into a hole once, and had occasion to consult attorneys. I used to claim that I produced genuine spirits, but on the advice of my attorneys I quit that. I now make a little speech, which you have heard, and I have every word of it down pat. Here it is, and if you study it closely you will see how nicely it avoids any specific claims:

"There are three phases of these phenomena presented through me. First, the genuine materialization, when the form appears entirely independent of the medium; second, etherealization, when the spirit is more like a vapor or cloud, with no substance to it; and, third, a transfiguration, when the body of the medium is used and clothed with white drapery, and brought out on the floor by the spirits."

"Whenever I think there are people present who will make trouble, I make the announcement that I am well defended and prepared for anything that may turn up. The bluff has worked well several times, but I made up my mind that if ever I got in a tight place I would not show fight. When a fellow's caught 'dead to rights' he might as well give in.

"Three years ago I left California and went to Colorado Springs, then to Salt Lake City, and then I came to Chicago. I only stayed here a few days, visiting friends, and then went to New York. I opened an office at No. 193 Sixth Avenue, and paid more attention to palmistry than materialization. I had a great big hand for a sign, and my shop was known as 'The Big Hand.' I soon became acquainted with lots of the newspaper boys, and they were regular visitors at my seances. They would write lots of stuff describing the ghosts' parade, but never attempted to expose me by violent means. Nellie Bly was a pretty good friend of mine, and I think I was the only medium she did not 'roast' or attempt to expose. Say, but she gave Zoda, the Persian beauty, an awful dressing down.

"I did pretty well at palmistry, but the medium business did not pay.



Why? Oh, mediumship is not appreciated as well in the East as in the West, generally speaking."

"Where is the centre of spiritualism?"

"Boston! Boston! It's the home of it and the hotbed of mediumship."

"How about Chicago?"

"Can't get 'em here. The average medium is scared to death of the town, and would sooner go five hundred miles than go near it."

"What are they afraid of?"

"Bundy. Why, when I came here it was on the solicitation of Dr. Alma, who assured me that there was a good thing in it for me, and that I should be well protected. Looks as if I was protected, doesn't it?"

Just at this point the conversation wandered from the spook business, and the date of the expose, February 20, was mentioned.

"There's a curious coincidence," said Archer. "Just a year ago to the day the Luther R. Marsh Diss De Bar trouble happened in New York. I believe February 20 is my unlucky day, and I shall watch myself closely that day each succeeding year. Yes, I knew Marsh well, and I think he is one of the smartest, brainiest men in the country. He came to one of my seances in New York during the winter before this, and seemed to be more than satisfied with my tests and manifestations. In fact, he was so well pleased that he asked me to go to his place at Middleton, N. Y., and spend the holidays with him. There I met Mrs. Huyler, Marsh's own medium, and we got along well until February, when we had trouble, and my wife and I were kicked out without a cent, on one of the coldest nights of that cold winter. Mrs. Huyler is a woman of wonderful hypnotic power, and had a strong hold on Marsh. While at her house we gave a number of seances, but the Middleton papers made it hot for us. It was while at Middleton that I got into a row with Diss De Bar. She was jealous because I had Marsh, and said I was a 'fake' because I had declared she was a fraud."

Here Archer smote the desk with his fist, and declared:

"A medium's worst enemy is a medium; there's no honor among 'em."

"You think there should be honor among thieves, then?" was suggested.

"Well, there's none among mediums. Why one of them skipped town last night with eight hundred dollars in her pocket, and did not so much as come near me and offer me aid. No two mediums can work together, and they always try to cut each other's throats. Now, every medium in the country will take a great delight in spreading the report of my trouble, saying that they always knew I was a 'fake.'"

"You want to know if I have ever made 'hits,' so to speak—have produced the spirits visitors wanted. Yes, lots and lots of times; so many, in fact, that I really pay no attention to it now. If it hadn't been for your intense longing to see your sister I wouldn't have been captured Sunday night. There were so many strangers in the circle that I almost made up my mind not to give the seance; but I was broke and needed the money, so I let her go, making up my mind, however, to cut it short. I was going to close when I remembered how anxious you were to clasp your sister by the hand. So I said to myself, 'I'll give that poor fellow his sister, and wind up the show.' Your sister wound up the show, but in a manner totally unexpected. Perhaps, however, this whole thing is for the best. I'm tired of the



business. If my wife hadn't been sick I'd have quit it long ago. What I've told you kills me as a medium, so you see I'm honest in the statement that no more will I produce spooks to order. I'm through."

And then Archer, who had read the above story as it was written in condensed form, cheerfully agreed to sign it, which he did in a somewhat crude but perfectly legible hand.

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[THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE.]

### 'CABINET' EXCHANGED FOR CELL.

MRS. SAWYER, MEDIUM—BOUNCER BURK—MISS RAINGER, "SPOOK"—  
THE FRUIT OF SIX WEEKS OF PLANNING.

Miss Kittie Rainger, a "spirit from the other world," Mrs. Carrie M. Sawyer, medium, and Frank Burk, manager, "bouncer," and "magnetist," were exposed by *Tribune* reporters in the midst of a seance at No. 30 Ogden Avenue last night. The circumstances of the exposure were dramatic in the extreme, and were brought to a fitting climax by the clang of the patrol wagon. The captured spirit and those who had invoked her were carted off to the Harrison Street Station, locked up for the night, and will be brought before Justice Prindiville this morning to answer a charge of obtaining money under false pretenses. George Burk, the "bouncer's" son, was arrested for assault and battery in attempting to rescue the "spirit" from her captors, but was permitted to remain overnight in the house to care for Miss Della Burk, the medium's daughter, who is seriously ill.

The capture and arrest form the final chapter in a remarkable story. Mrs. Sawyer, whose fame as a medium is as wide as the continent, has been giving nightly and daily seances in Chicago for six months. Such has been her success that Mr. Burk, her manager, recently took a lease on the house for a year from May 1.

Last night there were nineteen persons, men and women, in her front parlor. Fourteen were ardent believers in her power. Three were *Tribune* reporters, supposed from their frequent attendance to be believers also. One was a detective in league with the reporters. Another proved to be a skeptic, who came to the aid of the newspaper men and detective in the dramatic scene which closed the seance. Each paid one dollar admission. It was what Manager Burk before the denouement called a select seance—there was nineteen dollars in it.

The lights had been turned down to a ghostly dimness. A portly woman took a seat at the piano in place of Miss Della Sawyer, who, but for her sickness, would have furnished the music. To her accompaniment the circle sang "Nearer, My God, to Thee." Spirits, at first evanescent, began to appear, while the musical voice of "Little Maudie," the medium's cabinet spirit, came from the box-like inclosure in which Mrs. Sawyer had been confined. A pleasant excitation thrilled the believers. A feeling of expectancy ran through the others.

### THE CLIMAX.

Then the spirits became stronger in their materialization. They emerged from the soft folds of the heavy curtains in front of the cabinet and entered the

parlor. Courtney H. Horine's two daughters, Gertie and Jessie, whom he buried years ago, revisited him and held up their spiritual mouths for his kisses as they had once done their material lips. A Mr. Greerson's father and mother came to see him and consoled him for his childish disobedience. A Mr. Dedham's dead wife assured him of her undying love despite their bodily separation. Others received visitations—a dozen or more. Then one of the reporters, who had been flirting for weeks with the spook of a lost sweetheart, "Susie," was called to the curtains by Burk.

"Mr. Oldham," said Mr. Burk, using one of the reporter's *nom de spirite*, "your Susie is here." Mr. Burk was sitting near the curtains on the right of the room, where he could catch the whispered announcements of the spiritual visitors and make them known.

"Susie, do you love me still?" asked the reporter, as he met the fair ghost near the cabinet.

"Yes," she whispered, tapping his arm with a light spiritual love-tap.

No sooner had she answered than the reporter put his arm around her waist and cried:

"Light!"

The scene which followed was like an act from a melodrama. As a flash-light, struck on the instant by another reporter, pierced the darkness "Susie" shrieked. It was a shriek that would have done credit to any ghost that ever waked the shadows of a grave-yard. It brought Mr. Burk to her help in an instant. It brought the whole circle to its feet in wild confusion. But the detective, John Broderick of the Central Detail, laid a hand on Mr. Burk. That not sufficing he whipped his elastic billy a few times over his arms.

But the scene was not yet finished. The reporter who struck the light was making his way to the front door to signal Detective Ben Williams outside and call the patrol wagon. As he opened the parlor door leading into the hall-way young George Burk rushed in, his coat off, his fists before him—the picture of a rescuing hero. He played his part well. He had not acted the part of the Craven in "Woman Against Woman" to no purpose. But his headlong entrance was cut short by the third reporter, an old Princeton College football man, who grappled with him and silenced him.

The signal to Williams had by this time had its effect. He entered with two brawny officers in uniform, and the thing was done.

#### "SUSIE" MAKES TEARFUL CONFESSION.

In the meantime the struggles and cries of the spirit "Susie" in the arms of her captor were piteous. She sought to escape until she became hysterical.

"O let me go," she pleaded. "Mrs. Sawyer got me into this. I came to nurse Della, who used to act my part herself. I've only done it for three weeks. I will never do it again. I know its wicked. O let me go!"

Again and again she tried to break away. When her beautiful blonde spirit-wig was torn off and her glossy brown hair exposed she burst into a flood of tears and drew the white, filmy covering with which she was clothed about her face to prevent that from being seen. When this was taken off she cried again at the thought of being exposed in a bifurcated skirt.

"Mrs. Sawyer is the one to blame," she cried in her shame. "She told me it would be fun to hoodwink people, and I thought so till tonight. I see how



wrong it is now. Don't take me to the station. I've never been in a station. O let me go!"

Her dress, the dress she wears as a real girl, was brought down from the third story by one of the officers. While she was donning it in the rear parlor, she said, through her tears:

"Mrs. Sawyer is the guilty one. She's been acting the male ghost. I will tell everything, if you let me go. O let me go!"

Mrs. Sawyer had skipped out of the cabinet at the first breeze of the squall, slipped through the rear parlor door into the hallway, and made her way upstairs. But in the cabinet she had left abundant evidence that her confederate was truthful in the statement that the medium had personated ghosts. Her shoes were there on the floor. She had removed them to imitate the noiseless tread of spirits. Her confederate's feet had been incased in soft knit slippers. A lot of toggery was there, too. She had used it for various unearthly characters she represented. It was dumped in the patrol wagon along with the blonde wig, the white wrapping, and the slippers of the girl.

Among the witnesses not already named whose nerves were jostled by the unexpected outcome of the seance were Andrew Helberg, No. 6720 Wentworth Avenue; C. H. Millspaugh, Englewood; E. W. Grawly and wife, Halsted and Twelfth Street; F. N. Foster, No. 29 Sheldon Street; and Francis Whitney, No. 11 Park Avenue, the skeptic who gave aid in the events succeeding the exposure. The people who have been paying their money to be duped were told by Detective Williams to go home and reflect before putting themselves in so ridiculous a plight again.

#### TAKEN TO THE STATION.

Finally, the ghost having been properly dressed, Mrs. Sawyer having put on a stylish wrap and stunning bonnet, Mr. Burk having thrown an elegant overcoat over his shoulders, the party, captured and captors, filed out of the house. Young George Burk was left behind on parole to attend Miss Sawyer.

A crowd had gathered on the sidewalk. It was made up of neighbors who had long marveled at Mrs. Sawyer's power over the other world, street boys who grinned as the ghost passed through them, and lingering members of the circle which had witnessed the catastrophe to their faith in spooks.

"Gelang!" called the driver of the patrol-wagon to his horses, and they bounded away to the Harrison Street Station. It was as odd a lot of arrests as a patrol-wagon ever carried.

"How we have been cheated!" said one of the former enthusiasts, as the wagon rumbled around the corner. But the other believers who still stood around looked dazed as men and women do when they are suddenly confronted with a crisis in their belief.

At the Harrison Street Station Mr. Horine made strenuous efforts to have the arrested spiritualists released, but failed. In the trumpery displayed at the station were a pillow-case, a small linen bag much the worse for want of washing, and a pile of gauze, crepe, mosquito netting, shoes, slippers, wigs, and false hair.

A plain pasteboard cross daubed with luminous paint, which had served to give immortal light in the parlor, capped the heap. The cross was about six

inches high and four inches wide. The arms were about an inch in width. The false hair captured included a set of coarse, black, long chin whiskers, and a wig of tow-colored curls. A loose gauze gown was daubed in lines and spots with luminous paint. Otherwise it was muddy-brown with dirt. Two white crepe veils were crumpled into a long string, but easily unrolled. A white cheese-cloth shawl about six feet long was wrapped around a pair of blue knit slippers, with felt soles. The foot that squeezed into one of them was a No. 4½, D. A pair of corsets marked "G," and a green cloth bodice trimmed with black velvet, made up the bundle of captured paraphernalia.

The bail of each was fixed at \$300.

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[FROM THE BOSTON HERALD.]

### LEAVES FROM THE LIFE OF A SPIRITUALIST.

BAPTIST MINISTER, MAIL ROBBER, AND MEDIUM.—DRIVEN FROM CITY TO CITY BY A BAD RECORD.—IDENTITY OF PARSON RAINS AND W. R. COLBY.—DETECTED IN FRAUD BY A "HERALD" REPORTER.

Attached to the stone pilaster at the left of the doorway of the three-story brick house at No. 443 Shawmut Avenue, just above Blackstone Square, is a good-sized japanned tin sign, bearing, in large, gold letters, the inscription, "W. R. Colby." Above it is a more modest one, reading, "W. E. Wheelock, M. D.," and under the first story window is another, marked, "Dr. D. J. Stansbury."

But the first mentioned sign has a position that makes it prominent among its fellows, and it is still more conspicuous in that it gives no inkling of the profession or occupation of the man whose name it bears. Doubt on this point may be dissolved, however, by anyone who will take the pains to ring the bell and ask for a card. If there is nothing about him to excite suspicion, he will be cordially greeted by whoever chances to come to the door, and he will receive a bit of pasteboard, on which is printed :

#### DEVELOPMENT OF MEDIUMSHIP.

W. R. COLBY,

Independent Slate-Writer  
and

Test Medium.

Lectures and Platform Tests.

Will Answer Calls for Funerals.

443 Shawmut Avenue, Boston, Mass.

This W. R. Colby is a man whose attainments have made his name familiar in spiritualistic circles in Boston and its vicinity within the past few months, and believers will tell you that he is one of the most phenomenal mediums that has ever given manifestations of his abnormal power in this section of the country.

Colby first brought himself prominently before the spiritualists of New England at the Onset Bay camp last summer. Who he was or where he came from no one seemed to know, and few cared. It was enough for them that he could, with the aid of his "spirit control," produce slate-written messages from dead friends *ad libitum*.



His almost invariable success in procuring communications from the "world unseen" made him immensely popular in this confiding community, notwithstanding that his methods of serving his clients were palpably those that have been so often exposed and explained. He spoke frequently at the meetings, and on one occasion gave what he was pleased to term a "platform test." It consisted in producing upon one of two slates, placed face to face, a drawing of a bird on a twig, and a list of names of several so-called mediums who had died.

While at Onset Colby committed an indiscretion that has finally led to the upturning of a portion of his record that he would probably prefer not to have generally known, and which stamps him as a rather undesirable man to have in any community, unless he shows a disposition to be upright and to desist altogether from fraudulent practices. It came to his ears that Mr. John Curtis, who was spending the summer at the bay, had intimated that he had led a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde sort of career down in Texas some years ago. This turned out to be a point on which Colby was peculiarly sensitive, and, meeting Mr. Curtis on the street one day last July, he asked him if he was the author of said intimation. Mr. Curtis replied in the affirmative, and Colby struck him in the face. He was promptly arrested, and was tried and convicted in the court at Wareham of assault.

At the trial, while Mr. Curtis was on the stand, Colby asked him if he had ever known of him by any other name.

"Yes," was the prompt reply. "I know of you as W. J. Rains, a Baptist minister, of Hearne, Texas, convicted of robbing the United States mails, and sentenced to prison for a term of five years."

Colby's face blanched, and he took his seat. That one question had been sufficient for him.

The answer was a bold one, and the charges it implied created a sensation. They led to an investigation of this wonderful slate-writer's record, and established the fact that his doubtful practices have made residence in several localities in this broad country disagreeable for him.

#### THE DUPER DUPED.—TRAPPED BY A NEWSPAPER MAN WHO WORKED THE MIRROR TRICK ON HIM.

Among the many callers at the Colby residence yesterday was one who came to do the duping himself, and not to be duped. He had all the appearance of being a very innocent countryman, but he had been upon such missions before, and it was not his first visit there. He had shadowed the house for several days, and had thoroughly sized up the "medium." The details of this visit will be read with interest by many who undoubtedly have been mystified by what appeared to be wonderful demonstrations of spirit influence.

The point that the writer wished to settle was this. Is Colby a medium, or is he a fraud?

He is undoubtedly a fraud if he makes claim that spirits either instigate or perform his slate-writings.

From the procession of dupes who during the past few days have held communion with spooks of the supernal world, one individual was singled out

who was found to be in touch with the plans to strip this ghostly deceit of its mask. He gave the writer an explanation of the hocus-pocus which Mr. Colby went through, and this explanation afforded the means of divining the manner of securing the "attention" and "assistance" of the spirit servants.

Wednesday afternoon Mr. Colby was called upon by the writer for the purpose of having him call up the dead and giving them a little interview. But the "conditions were not favorable for a successful seance," and therefore the "sitting" was set for Thursday afternoon.

Thursday came, and with it the scribe. Dr. Colby had measured his caller, but had sized him up short. By the way, everybody calls him "doctor," but he dislikes to be so designated. "Plain Mr. Colby is good enough for me," said he to his new victim, the reporter, as he ushered him into his rear room, a well-lighted apartment, wherein his graveyard subjects are supposed to hold social converse with the living, and toy with their hopes and feelings.

The first thing that the spook usher did was to write upon a slip of paper, "Dick Booth, please help us." This slip, with a number of blanks of similar size, he pushed over to the writer. Both sat at a small table, one opposite the other

"You may write upon these blanks the names of friends or relatives in the spirit land, and beneath the names write any question you please. After you have filled what blanks you please, fold them up and call for me."

His directions were followed, and five slips were filled out, thus:

"Will Annie please tell me what best to do with Paul?"

"Dollie Hickelberger—Ought I to change my business to another locality?"

"Dear friend, Peter Hughes—Will my venture prove successful?"

"Edward McCluney—Can you tell me anything about my chances of success or failure in the patent line?"

"———, Can you suggest which is best for me—to stay East or go West?"

Now, Annie is the name of the wife of the spook interviewer, and she was at home, probably administering the sole of a slipper to Master Paul. Dollie Hickelberger was an imaginary person. Peter Hughes, at the time, was masticating a tenderloin steak at the Langham Cafe, and making a void in a cut-glass jug of Guinness and Bass mixed, and waiting to hear the result of the writing excursion into spirit-land. Edward McCluney was another "fake" name that had its origin in the brain of the writer.

The last slip was written for a purpose. The blank lines represent the name of a departed friend. It was offered with this purpose in view. There are those who sincerely believe in the mysteries of spiritualism, and if Mr. Colby was a true medium, he should have the opportunity to demonstrate the fact. The scribe who was there to detect him in any crooked movement was also ready to credit him with any wonderful performance or manifestation. If a genuine medium, the questions to bogus spirits would not trouble him; at least, so say spiritualists who claim to know.

A proper question to one really in spirit-land was furnished, so as to make the test complete. The name in the latter instance is withheld for obvious reasons.

When Mr. Colby returned to the spook chamber he took up one of the folded bits and placed it under the writer's left hand, and then placed his right



hand upon the sitter's left. After a few moments Colby took up one of the slips from the table, and applied it to his forehead. The slips were kept folded.

He appealingly asked his controlling spirit, Dick Booth, to tell him what was in the paper, and suddenly he thought a spirit had flitted near by him, and began to question it for its name. "Come, now, give us your name. We can't proceed without your name." So earnestly did he plead that he forgot to keep the slip pressed to his forehead, and by degrees it went down below the table. Then he began to look down, as if looking at the spirit, and begging it to tell its name.

"Oh, no, that won't do," said he, and then, requesting the writer to take another folded slip, he laid aside the one he had been holding to his head. This kind of business was continued until he had pressed several pieces of the paper to his head and then passed them down under the table, and had nearly all of them under his hands. During these manipulations he finally secured the one he wanted, and, after pressing it to his forehead, returned it to the table, and then, as if carelessly done, passed it to the writer to put under his left hand, saying:

"We ought to get some manifestations by this time. You seem to be a good subject; the spirits are all around us, and appear eager to talk to you, but I won't open the way to them until they tell me just what are their names."

During this talk he had picked up another slip, and, putting it to his head, he began to tremble as if in a slight convulsion. This is a common trick with fake mediums. Suddenly he exclaimed, "Ah! do you want to talk? You prefer to write! Well, tell me your name!" Then he began to coax the supposed spirit to identify itself, and in doing this he dropped the hand holding the slip to his brow until it was below the table top, and then he looked down benignly and beseechingly upon the spirit that might have been at his knees. All this time he knew what was in the slip under the joined hands, and he was only learning what was in the slip in his own free hand—his left.

How does the writer know this? you ask.

Well, this is how. When Mr. Colby went into another room at the time he gave the writer the slips to make out, preparations were made for an exposure of the medium's trick. It was found that the cloth upon the table hung too low for a chance to see underneath the table from one side to the other, so it was drawn over to the side upon which the scribe sat, and the loose portion folded up on his knee. This arrangement gave the writer an opportunity to operate a small hand-mirror under the table, so that from his side he could see all that was going on under the table on the other. It is a very simple thing to do, but is unfailing in its results.

After the medium had coaxed his spirit sufficiently, he apparently felt satisfied that it would write out its name. He took a slate—an ordinary, cheap article, which he buys by the crate—and upon it he wrote the name "Annie."

"That won't do," said he, with an assumed air of impatience; "you must give the whole name; that is only half of it."

Well, now things became interesting, for the writer had at no time ever mentioned his last or first, or any other name to Colby, and upon none of the

slips did his name appear. If he could announce Annie's last name he would be doing something wonderful. But what did he do?

Like all the fakirs of his class, he took bold and desperate chances. He concluded that the name Edward McCluney was that of a brother, and down went the second part of the spirit's cognomen, which made it "Annie McCluney."

"This is your wife?" asked the spook doctor.

"Yes," unblushingly replied the scribe.

The question was a natural one for him. The reference to "Paul" gave him the cue to suppose that "Annie" was the spirit of a wife.

The name having been built to suit the occasion, the spirit's reply came rapidly. Mr. Colby wrote as follows upon the slate. Of course, it was supposed to be the spirit that did the writing through his hands:

"MY DEAR HUSBAND:—You will necessarily have to be away a great deal as you perfect your work, and I cannot help but feel that it would be wise for you to put Paul in a good home, and you can watch over him. Kiss him for me.  
ANNIE MCCLUNEY."

The first question and the answer to it having been disposed of, Colby took up another slate, and proceeded as before. He, with apparent carelessness, picked up a slip which he previously had had to his brow, and which he had also held under the table to examine, and gave it to the writer to cover with his left hand while he picked up another slip and passed it to his brow. Had he compelled the writer to lay both his hands upon the slip, he would not have been detected in his trick; but the writer's right hand was free to act. It went down into the depths of a side pocket in his overcoat, which he wore during the "test," and drew forth a little hand-mirror that had done duty before in a similar cause. The writer could not stoop so as to look under the table, but the little reflector, held at a proper angle, brought the "medium's" hands and fingers into view. He was distinctly seen to open the folded slips when he got them down, as he thought, out of sight of his patron.

By this means he learned all the names, and the name of the one dead man that was used; the names of the living and of the imaginary beings all came to his net as spooks, and he manufactured the replies to suit the character of the questions. The other answers, upon other slates, were as follows:

"There is no question in my mind but what you are sure to succeed with it, and realize a considerable amount of money from it. But hold on to it. While it may be slow, yet success will surely come.

"EDWARD MCCLUNEY."

"Go West by all means.

— —."

"Bound to be a success, but I advise going West with it by all means.

"PETER HUGHES."

The fifth answer was written between closed slates—a neat trick when cleverly done, and Colby does it excellently. The answer and name are first written upon the slate, but are invisible until after the writing is dampened with an acidulated preparation, which is in a sponge on the table. After he writes the message, which he does while pretending to be waiting for some coy or reluctant spirit, he picks up another slate pencil, and finally succeeds in writing the name sought in the ordinary white lines of the slate pencil.

"Is this the name?" he asks, and upon the acknowledgment that it is, he



wipes it out with the sponge, thus applying the acid to his previous writing, which was not visible. He immediately slaps another slate to the one bearing the message, holds them up, goes through some contortions, as if in pain, and then reveals the reply, written in red. The message delivered to the writer in this way, from an imaginary spook, read as follows :

"By all means change. Go West.

"DOLLIE HICKELBERGER."

This completed the seance, and, of course, the medium was complimented on his great success in getting messages from spirits who were not in spirit-land, and for converting at will imaginary beings into obliging and well-behaved ghosts. Two dollars was Mr. Colby's price for this bit of fraud, and the writer paid him ten cents each additional for the five slates upon which the trashy writing appeared.

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[FROM BOSTON HERALD.]

### HIGH PRIEST OF SPOOKDOM.

THE PRINCE IMPERIAL OF THE ONSET BAY CHARLATANS.—CREATOR OF THE ONCE MARVELOUS "ANGEL ANTHEMS" AND "SPIRIT PICTURES" DETECTED IN HIS GAME OF FRAUD—HOW THE EXPERT WAS TRAPPED AND HIS METHODS FULLY EXPOSED.

The latest spiritualistic humbug who has been detected at his tricks is that high priest of spookdom, "Dr." D. J. Stansbury, formerly of San Francisco, late of Boston and now of Onset Bay. This is the alleged medium whose spirit pictures and angel voices singing in the air once caused the faithful to marvel, made the skeptical speculate, and kept the scientific at work thinking.

For the purpose of showing collusion between the spiritualistic humbugs, and to better expose the tissue quality of their powers, it was necessary to also unmask one of the "doctors" agents, Mrs. Bliss, the alleged materializer of "full forms."

Several weeks ago "Dr." Stansbury had his shingle hung out at No. 443 Shawmut Avenue. It was here that the notorious fraud and ex-convict W. R. Colby was caught at his methods of deception by a *Herald* reporter, and driven out of the city by the exposure.

"Dr." Stansbury, the dispenser of "spirit medicines, prepared under the control of an ancient band," advertised himself as a slate medium of extraordinary power. Through those whom he had duped he posed as a spirit writer of wonderful ability, and a *Herald* reporter, a lady, was sent to test his prowess in this field.

The lady is married, her husband is living, and she is without children. She played her part well. She never once said to the medium that she was wedded, or that she had children living; nor did she represent herself as a widow, or pretend that she had any children in the spirit land; but she wrote out certain sentences upon slips of paper, which it was supposed that the spirits only would read. In some manner "Dr." Stansbury became acquainted with the contents of the slips of paper, and he at once set down his visitor as a credulous widow, who wanted to learn what was best to do with

her children, and to see the materialized form of her dead husband. The manner in which the medium learned these things is best told in the language of the lady who made the test.

After a couple of visits at No. 443 Shawmut Avenue, I managed to see the "doctor," and I told him I wanted some slate writing. I showed my money and he was eager to possess it. I was asked my name and place of residence, which I unhesitatingly gave as Mrs. Smith of Waltham.

The room in which the test was to take place was nicely furnished. Lace draperies adorned the windows and permitted plenty of light to enter the room. An ordinary slate that I noted had one corner broken out, and in the aperture was set a dog's head in brass. In the centre of the room stood a round black walnut table. It was here that the doctor performed his slate writing and his professed manifestations of spirit power. The person desiring to communicate with the spirits had to sit directly opposite him. On the table immediately in front of him was a small tidy of crazy patch-work upon which was a black box with a lid. This box was eleven inches long, seven inches wide and probably four inches high. Its hinges were on the side. When the lid was raised the open box faced the medium, and the visitor could only see the top of the cover. Only the medium could see into the box. To the left of the box — from where the medium sat — was one of Dr. Gassau's dry batteries and an ordinary telegraphic ticker.

"Dr." Stansbury was in the room when I entered it. His dark, searching eyes kept up a constant inspection of the subject before him. He wore a lady's India shawl, and his long gray locks were pushed back from his forehead under a small round black cap. He seated me down to the table directly opposite him, and proceeded to communicate with the spirits in my behalf. He commenced by saying: "I use this little machine," pointing to the battery and ticker, "as a means to get my messages from spirit land. You will please write out any questions you want answered by the spirits, fold them and pass them to me."

I told him that I had already written them out, and I passed over to him the questions my husband had written the night before. They were as follows:

Slip 1 — Will the control please communicate with John and advise me what to do with the children?

Slip 2 — Shall I accept the position of governess?

Slip 3 — Shall I sell or improve what property is left?

Slip 4 — Will the control please tell me through what medium will John materialize with the most ease and comfort?

The fitness of these questions will be appreciated when it is known that I have had only one husband, who lives; I have no children; I wish for no position such as governess, nor have I any property to sell or improve.

When I handed the doctor the folded slips I observed that he watched me closely. He remarked, as he took the folded bits of paper and laid them in the box:

"You have a penetrating eye and the color shows intelligence. With your eyes you could see through anything."

All this time he had the lid of the box up and one of his hands was inside of it, while his eyes shot back and forth between me and the interior of the box. It required no cunning to detect his method, for he deliberately opened



one of the folded bits of paper and read the question upon it while passing the compliment on my perspicuity of sight. Having read one or more of the slips he quickly refolded the paper, withdrew it from the box, dropping the lid thereof, and placed it under the ticker. Then followed his pretended confab with the spirits.

"Will you speak to us?" he said very softly, addressing some imaginary spook. "Come now, please do talk to us. Ah! Is that you, Jennie? No? Well, whoever you are, please speak." Then turning to me, he said dreamily: "I guess we can get them to talk." Returning to the spooks about him, he said in a pleading tone: "Haven't you got something you wish to communicate?" A pause—and then the ticker began to hammer out its little dots and dashes of sound, which the doctor, who is an expert telegrapher, proceeded to read.

For the purpose of drawing my attention away from the box, he said, as he reached me some paper and a pencil: "I always want people to write down what the spirits say. The spirits desire it, and it helps me along in the work."

I did as directed. As I wrote out the messages, he took advantage of my head being bowed over my writing and opened the box every now and then to read the slips. His first reply from spirit land was about the children, and after each answer he took out a fresh slip and placed it folded under the ticker.

The answers that he gave me were as follows, and I wrote them out:

In regard to the children, I will be satisfied with whatever disposition you can make of them. They have been a burden.

In regard to the property. I think it best not to improve it. You had better sell, and invest in bonds to have a steady income. John says you need not worry about it; all will be right.

In regard to the change, we think it would be best for you to accept the position that has been offered you for the present. It will lead to something higher and better.

You have all the elements of a true medium, and receive impressions very readily, and are usually very correct. We are not able just now to get direct communication with your husband. We have sent for him and expect him later. We think Mrs. Bliss the best one you can see to materialize him.

I suggested to the "doctor" that I should like some slate writing and that I should want the slates. When I made this suggestion I was fully aware that since the *Herald's* exposure of Colby slate mediums were averse to letting strangers carry away with them these tangible proofs of fraud. He attempted to make me believe that the conditions were unfavorable for the slate test, but I was persistent and told him of friends who had slates to show and I wanted one, too.

At one side of the table stood a pile of slates, about a dozen in number. Two of these he drew out. While he was very careful to let me see both sides of one slate, I carefully observed that he showed me but one side of the other, which he held in his left hand. By a quick movement the two slates were brought together, and the unseen side of the left hand one faced the other. The medium then held one end of the double slates and the other end he reached over to me to take hold of with both hands.

I knew what was coming. I took hold of the slates as directed, and shortly after came the usual silence and contortions on the part of the medium, and then the sounds of the writing—the alleged movement of the spirit pencil. Do you wonder how the sounds are produced?

While holding the slates the middle finger of my left hand suddenly slipped, as if by accident, down the side of the slate and touched the index finger of the doctor's right hand, as it was scraping with the nail on the under surface of the under slate. The writing stopped instantly. He looked me in the eye savagely. I did not quail and looked innocent, as if I had not observed what had happened. He separated the slates. Upon the surface of the slate which he had held in his left hand and on the side which he had failed to show me was this communication, written in chalk :

You are one of the grandest mediums, and have a noble mission, in which you will bring light and joy to the sorrowing ones of earth. Many high ones come to you and will assist you.

ALICE CARY.

This communication was one of the "property sort, which are kept in stock to fit anybody who comes along. The doctor tried another slate in a different manner. He passed it under the table. When he drew it forth, of course it contained a "spirit" message. There was no display of ingenuity ; a child could have done it. He put the slate beneath the table, holding it with one hand while he wrote with the other.

This is what he produced from my imaginary husband in ghostland :

We are all here today and come to bless you. You will have good luck this year, for you will be able to accomplish all. Will come again soon.

JOHN.

This closed the sitting. Dr. Stansbury told me that he was unknown to the spiritualists of Boston, but he had learned that a Mrs. Bliss and a Mrs. Stafford were materializing mediums. The former, he said, had mostly men come to her, while the latter materialized chiefly women, and as I wanted to materialize my husband I would have to consult Mrs. Bliss. Thanking him for his information I picked up my slates and departed.

Several days after I called again. The sitting he gave me was a very brief one.

After we had taken our places at the table, as on the previous occasion, the doctor passed me some blank paper and a pencil, and requested me to write out my questions. The paper which he had on hand for his clients' use was soft and white, in the form of blocks, and can be turned, twisted and rumpled without producing any sound.

This noiseless paper was just what I had no use for. I had brought my slips, as before, all prepared. There were just five questions written in black ink, in a large, bold hand, on very brittle, Belfast linen paper, which cracked and rattled noisily as it was manipulated. The slips measured 4½x2 inches, and each was folded four times.

He accepted them with much grace, while a triumphant smile curled about his lips and lit up his face.

He opened the lid of the box and bade me take up one of his writing blocks and proceed to write the communication. As I turned my attention to the writing pad, he glanced into the open box.

There was a rattling and a snapping of paper. The cause of the sounds was painfully apparent, and I could hardly suppress a smile. The doctor at once began to thump the telegraph ticker, and began to talk to me about my health and the state of the weather.



It was apparent that he could not work the slips in the telegraph box as he had done before, and so he proceeded to abstract them one by one. His method was that used by Colby, which was shown up in the *Herald* recently. He would take a slip from the box, hold it with one hand below the edge of the table to read it, while he rattled his telegraphic instrument to drown the sound made by the paper. Turning his eyes spasmodically, now up toward the ceiling and then downward to the carpet, as if invoking spiritual aid, he had all the opportunity required to read the slips, which he opened upon his knee and folded again.

On this occasion, as on the first, my questions were merely "faked" for the purpose of detection. Some of them were not material, but were put in to throw the wily trickster off his guard.

One question I addressed to John, asking him if there was anything I could do here for his comfort in the other world, and to this came the reply: "I am really most happy when talking with you through some medium whom I can control."

This was where Stansbury exhibited his finesse as a diplomat.

He was endeavoring to impress me with the idea that the best way to make poor, dear "John" happy was to come often, and leave each time a crisp two dollar certificate.

Another question was: "Will the enterprise I am now engaged in prove successful, and can you advise me how to make it a success?" Now the only enterprise that I was engaged in then was that of exposing "Dr." Stansbury. The reply was: "What you are trying to do will meet with the greatest success if you only push things," and I have done just what the "spirits" advised.

The medium was about to close his seance with me when I called his attention to the fact that I had given him five slips and he had answered only four.

As I pressed him for an answer he passed all the slips over to me for me to pick out the one in question. I found the question, refolded it and passed it to him. He put it to his forehead, went through the usual contortions, and then held it down below the edge of the table as he did the other. As I had no writing to do at the time, I could not escape watching his movements. I heard the rattling of the slip as he opened it upon his knee, and he saw that I heard it, and to divert my attention he began talking and at the same time struck up a great sounding of the telegraphic instrument.

I distinctly heard the crackling of the paper as he opened each one of the four folds, and I detected every glance he threw downward as he read the lines.

The question was: "I should like to have John come to me if only to say a word. Will he come if I go where he can come?"

The answer was: "I will meet you at Mrs. Bliss'. Go there; I will materialize through her. I wish to impress this upon you, for it will make me happy. I want you to be sure and sit once a week with this medium until I can get control."

I paid my second two dollars, and retired well satisfied.

## THE DARK ROOM SEANCE.

MRS. BLISS APPEARS AS "JOHN."—CIRCLE BREAKS IN CONFUSION.

Several days later I visited Mme. Bliss at No. 12 Pembroke Street. She was to have a dark room seance the following evening, and she invited me to come to her performance.

I was there. Several forms appeared to the dozen or so of persons present. I was the last person called. The voice of the manager, who sat near the cabinet, announced just as it came my turn: "that is a male spirit that is coming. I know it by the way it approaches, and by its raps!" All the other forms had been women and children.

The words were a cue for those behind the curtains to get a male spirit in readiness.

When I was called I walked over to the cabinet, and my face almost touched the draperies. They opened, and before me stood the form of a—woman. It was not Mrs. Bliss. To aid the spirits I thought I would give them a cue, and I said gently:

"Is it 'John?' 'John!'"

These words acted like magic, and the curtains came together as if they had springs attached to them. Upon the disappearance of the female figure there was the greatest confusion of voices within the cabinet, and Mrs. Bliss said something angrily in Cuban French. It was evident to me that "John" was being made up very hurriedly.

The manager undoubtedly sized up things as I did, and he said to Mrs. Bliss: "What's the matter? Is the lady too near the cabinet?"

Mrs. Bliss replied in her broken Spanish: "Yes. Why, Mr. West, what are you thinking about?"

"Please move from the cabinet," said the manager, and I obeyed. "The lady has stepped away," he said, addressing the medium.

The curtains parted again, and there appeared between the folds the form of a stout looking person that had all the appearance of a man from the waist up. The lower portion of the body was invisible.

This was "John"—the "John" that the medium had guessed at. The face of it was not that of Mrs. Bliss; it looked enough like it to be that of a twin. A false mustache of blackest hue gave a piratical cast to the whitened visage. A smile that was ghastly flitted over the "spirit's" face.

The figure uttered not a word. It was there but a moment, and as it saw that I made no demonstrations, it vanished.

The process of vanishing I distinctly saw. The medium suddenly dropped down upon her knees into the darkness. I could just perceive the outlines of the black mass as it crouched down at my feet, a few steps in advance of me. The curtains had not closed tightly together, and I could see the object plainly.

I mistook this for a part of the manifestation. I had no idea that the "spirit" was supposed to have disappeared, or I should not have made the blunder that I did.

Pointing to where she was on her knees, I said to the manager: "Shall I stoop down where she is?"



The manager replied "No" in a very decided tone, and he ordered me to my seat, saying: "The spirit has dematerialized."

If they had produced any kind of a likely looking "John," I would have assisted in carrying out the illusion.

I had hardly been in my seat a full minute, when the curtains of the cabinet again parted, and the form of the supposed "John" once more appeared and remained about fifteen seconds.

After "John's" disappearance there was a lively commotion back of the draperies in the cabinet. Mrs. Bliss was mad clean through. The manager struck up a music box to drown the quarrel going on inside. The box ground out the unsanctified melody of "Mme. Angot's Daughter," then "Way Down in Dixey."

When the last bar of "Dixey" died out, Mrs. Bliss stepped out and said in a very angry manner: "This seance has come to a close. As the guides have refused to act, nothing more can be done."

As I left I felt satisfied that there had been collusion, between the slate-writer and the materializer of "John."

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[FROM "THE LIGHT," LONDON.]

We have received from the Hon. Alex. Aksakoff the subjoined correspondence, to which he requests us to give publicity. We do not usually give space to the evolution of a fraud unless it is near to us. We expect to find them, and are not surprised when we do. But M. Aksakoff's request is a command.

M. Aksakoff tells us that he published in his paper, "Psychische Studien," in 1889, an article on a recognized photograph of a materialized figure obtained through the alleged mediumship of this "Dr." Stansbury. We never heard of him and, therefore, know nothing about him; but M. Aksakoff has been in communication with Mr. W. Emmette Coleman, a well known writer on subjects spiritualistic, who has preserved his scepticism in spite of, or (should one say) at the expense of, his spiritualism. It seems from this correspondence, a portion of which is appended, that there is one more to be added to the list of those who have found spiritualism pay. That is all. If M. Aksakoff had not given publicity to the case in Europe, we should have regarded it as quite unimportant. Tom Tiddler's ground is being recognized.

This is the letter that we are asked to give publicity to. It is printed as we received it:

CHIEF QUARTERMASTER'S OFFICE,  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, U. S. A., May, 1890.

HERR ALEXANDER AKSAKOFF.

Dear Sir,—Your kind favor of April 21st, 1890, duly received. I have collected various points of information *in re* Dr. Stansbury's materializations and photography, which I shall embody in this letter. From the first I was confident that he was a fraud. I attended an exhibition of slate-writing given by him in the Metropolitan Temple in this city, soon after his arrival here. The fraud was transparent to me all through, and the chairman, Mr. C. H. Wadsworth, detected him in fraud, and so announced to the audience. Friends of mine who had sittings with him told me that they caught him in fraud in his slate-writing. Dr. Stansbury belonged to a ring of fraudulent

mediums in this city, the members of which kept books containing names of sitters and other persons, with lists of so-called "tests." These tests and all other information that could be picked up about any and everybody by any of the so-called "mediums" were furnished to the other "mediums" of the ring. They assisted each other in giving spurious tests, and each of the "frauds" would send their sitters to one or more of the other "frauds," in order that the victim might be further swindled. For example, Mrs. J. J. Whitney would, while pretending to be under control, tell the sitters to go to Dr. Stansbury to get further communications or to have a spirit-picture taken, while Stansbury would advise his sitters to visit Mrs. Whitney, W. R. Colby, Fred Evans, Mrs. Beste Pettibone (slate-writer), and Rogers (the spirit-artist). I have had information concerning this ring and their frauds during two or three years.

I have seen a number of Stansbury's photographs, and I recognized them as reversed copies of other photographs, plates, &c. They were palpable frauds, simply copies of other pictures. The so-called "spirit" faces are copied on the negative first, and in such a manner (known to photographers) as to be invisible on the plates. The sitter is then photographed, and the plate is developed, bringing out both the sitter and the "spirit" form already on the plate.

The materializations and the photography of Dr. Stansbury took place in his residence in this city. One of Stansbury's sons married a Miss Dagmar. The young couple lived for a time with the doctor, while the manifestations were going on. The son supposed his father an honest man. One day his wife (*nee* Miss Dagmar) discovered in the bathroom, which adjoined the seance room, a secret panel in the door leading to the seance room, the opening through which the confederates entered the cabinet and played "spirits." She told her husband, and he, finding it true, was so hurt and disgusted to find his father such an imposter and cheat, that he immediately moved away from his father's house, and since then he never wants to hear the name of spiritualism mentioned. The authority for this is Mrs. Brown, the mother of young Mrs. Stansbury (*nee* Dagmar).

Over a year ago a few spiritualists of this city went to work systematically to find out the *modus operandi* of the materializing frauds and expose them. They succeeded in so doing, and under threat of arrest every one of them either left the city or stopped materializing, Dr. Stansbury included. In order to find out the trick, Mr. Joseph W. Maguire, an active spiritualist of this city, joined the "frauds" and worked with them as an assistant. To find out all about it, he played "spirit" with them at different places. He secured their confidence, fell in with them in their tricks, and found out the entire workings of the system. He then publicly exposed them, both by speeches to the spiritualists and in articles in the *Daily Chronicle* of this city, Dr. Stansbury's manifestations included. He has given me an account of the manner in which the Stansbury "marvels" were performed, including the "Jeanette" photographs. The three principal confederates of Dr. Stansbury who personated spirits were, Ida Colby, daughter of W. R. Colby, alias Raines (the mail-robber and convict that Colonel Bundy exposed in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* a year or two ago), and Birdie and Maud Patterson. At times various others would assist in playing spirits, mostly young people, third-rate actors,



not engaged professionally, but Ida, Birdie, and Maud were the principal "spook-players," as they are called here. Mrs. Patterson, mother of Birdie and Maud, conducted a notorious fraudulent materializing show at her residence in this city, for some time, and her daughters were the principal spirit-players there. Dr. Stansbury employed them to play spirits for him also, his seances being held on different nights from those at the Pattersons' house, so as to allow the girls to play spirit at both places.

Jeanette, the dead wife of Dr. Stansbury, was impersonated at Stansbury's seances by Maud Patterson. The way the Jeanette photographs were manufactured was this: Maud came out as Jeanette, a flash-light (magnesium) lasting scarcely a moment was produced, during which Dr. Stansbury photographed the form (Maud). From the developed picture of Maud the head was cut off, and a copy of a picture of Jeanette's head was put in its place. The place on the throat, where the juncture of Maud and Jeanette was made, was fixed up, covered over by some lace, so as to conceal the place of union. A band and star had been added to Jeanette's pictures to correspond with the band and star on Maud when she was photographed as Jeanette. Copies of this manufactured spirit-picture were then made, and exhibited and sold as the Jeanette picture. This picture really consists of the body of Maud Patterson and the head of Jeanette Stansbury. I am positively assured by Mr. Maguire, who was behind the scenes with the "frauds," and who played spirit along with Maud, Birdie, and Ida a number of times, that this is certainly the way this picture was fabricated, and I am convinced that it is true. He tells me that Maud used to appear as Jeanette at the Patterson materializations also; that is, she would play Jeanette one night at Stansbury's and the next night at her own home; and that parties, seeing her at the Patterson "show," would ask her to speak to Dr. Stansbury and get his permission to allow them to attend the manifestations. The charge for admission at Stansbury's was three dollars, while at the Patterson's it was only fifty cents.

There is a man in this city, named M. L. Wawyer, who is called the "spook carpenter," as he makes the panel doors, trick cabinets, &c., for materializing "frauds." He it was who usually accompanied Maud and Birdie Patterson from their home to Dr. Stansbury's residence upon the evenings when they went there to impersonate spirits.

At some of Mrs. J. J. Whitney's meetings here, Sunday evenings, what were called "spirit-voices" were heard. Mr. Maguire, who was chairman for Mrs. Whitney at the time, tells me that the voices were made by Dr. Stansbury, the present Mrs. Stansbury, and W. R. Colby, who were all three behind the scenes.

Hearing that J. J. Owen, editor of the *Golden Gate*, who at one time strongly endorsed Dr. Stansbury, had found out that he was a fraud, I called on him and told him of your letter to me. He said to me, "Tell M. Aksakoff that Stansbury is a scoundrel, and it has been discovered that the 'Jeanette' picture is a 'fraud.'" He then gave me a printed proof of an editorial, which he had written to insert in the *Golden Gate*, about Stansbury's frauds. Stansbury, he said, came to him and implored him almost on his knees not to publish it for the sake of his wife, "and," said Mr. Owen, "I agreed not to publish it if Stansbury would promise never to do such things again, which he

did," and so it was never published. I enclose a copy of this editorial. which was never published.

You can rely upon the truth of all I have herein written. Should you publish anything about the matter in the *Psychische Studien*, please favor me with a copy.

Very truly, (Signed)

WILLIAM EMMETTE COLEMAN.

And this is Mr. Owen's unpublished editorial. "Frauds" should meet with scant mercy. It is not our habit to concern ourselves with garbage: but now and again it is well to point out that these ghouls who prey on what better people would respect—the tenderest instincts of humanity—are usually caught, exposed, and throttled by spiritualists:

#### SUPPRESSED EDITORIAL.

Some surprise has been expressed at our silence concerning one whose name formerly appeared frequently in this journal—we refer to Dr. D. J. Stansbury. That this silence may not be misconstrued by any, we deem it best, in justice to ourselves, that we make a brief explanation. Some eight or ten months ago, as our readers will remember, there were several alleged mediums for form manifestations holding seances in this city, Dr. Stansbury among the number. At some of these seances, at times not less than eight solid material forms would appear at once, exciting suspicion in the minds of many good spiritualists that all was not right. Although knowing the materialization of the psychic form to be a grand truth, we nevertheless placed but little reliance upon the genuineness of most of these manifestations. We attended but very few of the seances, notably two given at the residence of Dr. Stansbury, both complimentary seances, where no test conditions were proposed by Dr. Stansbury or exacted by his guests. Trusting in the honesty of the man, whom we had known for several years, and had upheld many times in the *Golden Gate*, we were disposed to accept the manifestations we witnessed there as genuine, and we wrote up a favorable account of the same for our columns.

It was subsequently proven, conclusively to our mind, that the forms which appeared there in such solid shape were none other than those of professional confederates who "played" in various characters at various other alleged materializing seances in this city.

Once satisfied of this fact, we removed Dr. Stansbury's advertisement from our columns, and dropped his name from all reports referring to him.

These letters were sent to the *Banner of Light*, and publication refused. Mr. A. is a well-known writer for spiritualistic journals:

ONSET, MASS., July 29, 1891.

#### FRIEND AINSWORTH:

I was yesterday influenced to hold your slates again, and, to my surprise, I heard the writing. I send them to you in the hope that something good is written. The guide says they had some difficulty in getting under the paper, which you had fastened in the corner of the slate—you will understand what they mean. In moving down here from Boston one corner of the slate got broken; at least, I noticed a crack, and suppose that was the cause. The guides say they have done the best they could at the present time. My health is improving.

Yours as ever,

D. J. STANSBURY.



[COPY OF LETTER.]

F. P. AINSWORTH, *Postmaster,* }  
NORTH AMHERST, MASS., July 31, 1891. }

DR. D. J. STANSBURY:

My Dear Sir,—I am in receipt of yours of the 29th, and the slates by express. I do not know how properly to express my feelings under all the peculiar circumstances.

It is my rule of life to believe others honest until I find they are not, and I have had confidence in you until now, notwithstanding the prejudicial statements which I have read, coming from sources claiming authority. I have hoped they were based upon error instead of fact; but I am compelled to say that this test of mine with you forces me to the conviction that you cannot be an honorable gentleman. Microscopic examinations of the seals plainly show them to have been tampered with—indeed, so does careful use of the eye alone. The written names and questions which I securely fastened between the frames have been broken from their fastenings, and several peculiarities about the messages plainly demonstrate that they must have been written by a person ignorant of the facts necessary to proper replies.

My purpose in this experiment was not so much a personal or selfish one as for the good of our cause; and I not only hoped but expected to secure evidence which I could place before the public as to the genuineness of the phenomena under absolute test conditions, to attract the attention of skeptics and compel conviction of the truth. But I see that if I make anything public in this case I must declare the whole sad truth, and as yet I am undecided as to the wisdom of so doing. "To err is human, to forgive divine." I freely forgive you so far as I am concerned personally, and shall always regret that I could not retain my former regard for you as a gentleman and my confidence in you as a medium. I should think you would feel as though you were living over a volcano liable to break out at any time and bring ruin and desolation to yourself and your family. I can scarcely convince myself that any sane man would dare to pursue such a course as my experience with you indicates that you are following, for certainly this cannot be your first case. But, my dear sir, I hope it may be your last. Better abandon all mediumship at once than to suffer it to be loaded down with this incubus of deception, which must rest like a nightmare upon your conscience, and cause you days of weariness and anxiety, and nights of self-reproach and moral abasement at the bar of your own soul.

I write in all kindness and charity, and if I have said anything which you would not have said to me, had our relations been reversed, I am sorry for it. I could not say less, and I hope there will be no need for me to say more.

Yours, very truly,

F. P. AINSWORTH.

### NOTICE TO FAKIRS.

The following correspondence sufficiently explains itself.

BOSTON, MASS., Oct. 19, 1889.

J. C. BUNDY, Esq., Publisher *Religio-Philosophical Journal*:

Be kind enough to give your lowest rate on my advertisement in this week's *Banner of Light* (19th), to run one to three months, payable monthly in advance.

Yours, etc.

D. J. STANSBURY.

OFFICE OF RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL, }  
CHICAGO, Oct. 22, 1889. }

DR. D. J. STANSBURY:

That a spiritualistic fakir such as you are, a man who trades upon the gullibility of the public, who has made merchandise of a dead wife by pretending to have her materialized, and causing her to be personated by a confederate—that such a man should suppose all other men venal is not strange. That you should imagine that you could buy advertising space in the *Journal* is not remarkable after your experience with the press on either side of the continent. Let me tell you, however, you will never be worth money enough

to buy a line of space in the *Journal*, for, in my opinion, you have sunk too low ever to reform in this life; at least, it will always be unsafe to rely on your representations.

Heretofore I have taken the trouble to inform by private letter applicants of your class that they could not buy space in the *Journal*. In order to relieve myself of this task in the future, I shall publish this correspondence as a sufficient notice.

JNO. C. BUNDY.

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THE "BOSTON HERALD" ON MRS. M. E. WILLIAMS' FUNERAL SERVICE.

The city is at last free, if only for a time, from this class of humbugs. But they are as busy as ever elsewhere, and at Onset Bay camp grounds, no less than eighteen of them have congregated. Although every one of them has been, at one time or another, exposed in the newspapers, they are apparently highly esteemed, and seem to be making money out of their numerous dupes. It was only the other day that a funeral service was turned into a hollow mockery by the blasphemous conduct of one of these materializing frauds—Mrs. M. E. Williams, of New York. With a great deal of unction and apparent approval the *Banner of Light* of August 4 thus reports the strange ceremony: "The services of Mrs. Cutter's funeral were conducted in the usual form of a seance for materialization, Mrs. M. E. Williams, of New York, so well known as a medium for the above phase of manifestation, being present. An address was made by Dr. Holland (who conducts Mrs. Williams' seances), after which the curtain of the cabinet parted, and Mrs. Cutter, clothed in spirit form, stood for a moment in full view, with light sufficient for all in the room to fully recognize her. Moving forward to where her family were sitting, she extended her hands, as in the act of a mother's benediction, and exclaimed; 'My boys! my boys!' Evidently overcome with emotion, she stepped back a little to where rested the casket containing her tenement of clay. Laying her hand thereon, she exclaimed; 'Think not of the dead, but the living'; after which she returned to the cabinet for renewed strength. It was hoped she would be able to return to us again, but the unfavorable conditions prevented."\*

Mrs. Williams is evidently a believer in the value of advertising, as hundreds of posters adorn the trees of the camp ground, setting forth her gifts as a medium, and illustrated by a striking representation of a man clasping in his arms a female spirit, who, in materializing, still found time to conform to the fashions of this world, and attach to the rear of her spirit person a bustle of tremendous proportions. It is certainly a remarkable piece of advertising, but these Onset Bay people seem to swallow the delusion, bustle and all, with evident relish.

It is almost past belief that the management of Onset Bay camp grounds, who so rigidly exclude gamblers and other objectionable persons, should tolerate in their midst such a gang of arrant humbugs, and aid and abet them in their nefarious work of fleecing unsuspecting country people who visit the grounds, and who have confidence in them because they find them openly giving seances under the apparent sanction and endorsement of the respectable and honest spiritualists.

\* This beats the record. We have been told that it took a long time for a "form" to "get strength" enough to come out of the cabinet: yet Mrs. W. had the brass to impersonate the "spirit form" before the body was hardly cold.



[FROM THE NEW YORK WORLD.]

## ONE WAY TO DO IT.

MRS. MARY E. WILLIAMS, OF THE ADELPHI HALL CROWD OF SPOOK-RAISERS LIVING IN A BROWNSTONE HOUSE WORTH TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS, BUT OBTAINED FROM TOBACCONIST ANDERSON'S WIDOW FOR ONE DOLLAR. — "NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS," SAYS THE NEW PRIESTESS. — HOW THE JOB WAS DONE.

*Transferred.* — Brownstone house No. 232 West Forty-sixth Street. Mrs. Kate Anderson to Mrs. Mary E. Williams. Consideration, \$1.00.

Mrs. Williams is the well-known medium who presides over spiritualistic conclaves on Sunday afternoons at Adelphi Hall. Mrs. Anderson is the wealthy widow of John Anderson, the well-known tobacconist. The story involved in the above transfer for a nominal consideration of property valued at twenty-five thousand dollars, furnishes a curious parallel to the case of Luther R. Marsh and Mme. Diss Debar.

In the career of the two priestesses there have been many incidents of striking similarity. Mme. Diss Debar caused Lawyer Marsh to deed to her a fine residence up town. Voices from the spirit world communicated with him through the notorious woman, and told him to execute the deed. He complied, but when the fact became public the friends of the deceived lawyer came to his rescue, and compelled the woman to convey back the property to the rightful owner. Mrs. Williams, the "materializing psyche," has caused a tremendous sensation in the spiritualistic world by acquiring a fine brownstone mansion from Mrs. Anderson.

It was several years ago that the Widow Anderson first began attending the seances of Mrs. Williams. She was introduced there by John L. O'Sullivan, of No. 229 West Twenty-third Street, and usually attended the meetings in the company of her friend, Mrs. Swift. During those dark seances the medium, Mrs. Williams, would disappear into a cabinet, and then the visitor was enabled to hold converse with the spirit of her dead husband, John Anderson, who had contributed so freely, years ago, to the cause of Garibaldi and Italian liberty. The spirit of the old Italian general was also materialized, and talked delightfully with Mrs. Anderson.

Among other familiar spirits brought out to convince the widow, were those of her deceased sister Hattie, Dr. Benjamin Franklin, ex-Mayor Fernando Wood, and Carrie Miller, of Brooklyn. But the "materializing psyche" had three more familiar spirits which she controlled upon all occasions when she wanted to get right down to business. These were "Little Bright Eyes," Priscilla," and "Papa Holland."

How many times these experienced spirits communicated with the Widow Anderson, hinting that the "materializing psyche" ought to have a habitation of her own, has never been recorded; but it is generally conceded that the spooks called up at Mrs. Williams' seances were remarkably unanimous in urging that the "medium" should have a home.

If the wealthy widow wavered in her determination to satisfy the longing of the "materializing psyche" for the possession of a four story and basement brownstone front, her doubt was at last overcome by the gentle persua-

sion of "Little Bright Eyes." Mrs. Anderson thus describes one of the scenes where this spirit appeared:

"At last the curtains were folded aside and a transcendently beautiful spirit appeared, clothed in purest white drapery, which floated around her delicate form." But the rich widow was of the kind who hold hard on to their purse-strings, and she did not yield to the importunities of the spirits until the messages and the materializations were so delightfully practical as to be convincing.

[FROM NEW YORK WORLD.]

### A SYMPHONY IN LETTERS.

WRITTEN BY MR. BOSCHNECK TO MEDIUM MINNIE WILLIAMS.—THE THEME IS LOVE, AND LOTS OF IT.—REV. MR. MCCARTHY ADDS A DECIDEDLY SPICY COMPOSITION AND GETS THE FAIR SPOOK-RAISER DOWN ON HIM IN CONSEQUENCE—THAT SUIT FOR \$500 STIRS UP A LIVELY ROW IN SPIRITUALISTIC CIRCLES.

A glorious lesson to the dupes of Spiritualism was told exclusively in yesterday's *World*. It will not be heeded—it never is. The dupes love their slavery so dearly that the angel Gabriel could not disillusion them. But *The World* did its simple duty and is content.

In the second letter, which is very long, Mr. McCarthy writes:

Strange that this letter of yours, written less than one year ago, should thus continue in a tone of anguish to me: "I wish I could leave America for awhile! There is no rest!" Even then when you were preaching to me of that cause which you represented as "so high and holy," what had you done to make it pure and holy? You make the seance-room the boudoir of the courtesan. What had Mrs. Boschnack done to you that you should give her reason to curse your spiritual mediumship, which you used with such terrible effect to rob her of her husband and the father of her children?

Be warned! Repent in time! You can return this \$500, but you can never repair the wrong you have done to your chaste married sister.

. . . . .

THURSDAY, A. M., Aug. 19, '86,

MY DARLING MINNIE: I presume you have come back from your short vacation, and I am pleased to greet you upon your happy return. I am so sorry to see you put to so much annoyance through the careless absence of Mr. M., and I wish I could remove all trouble and worry off your mind. I hope you will make arrangements to take a few days off next week to take a little fresh air and rest; it would do you so much good. In case Mr. M. has not returned by Friday eve, and you should want my assistance to mail papers, &c., I should be only too glad to aid you. I expect to see the time when I shall be able to take the whole concern off your shoulders, and make the B. L. (Beacon Light) a source of comfort to you, both morally and financially.

Sustained by your generous love, I shall certainly succeed. Will I hear from you?

Your everlasting lover,

FRED.

P. S.—Please remember me to our sweet baby, Gertie, and to gentle "Bright Eyes."

F. B.

FORTE.

FRIDAY, Aug. 20, 1886, 5 P. M.

MY ONLY LOVE: Your note reached me just in time to enable me to write these few lines before closing. I have little time to tell you how I feel to



be separated so long from you, but you will be amply repaid by the caresses I have in store for you, and the many things an overflowing heart will disclose. Will you have anything in store for me? I can almost feel a fond kiss. Many thanks for the encouraging news from B. E. In regard to a more pleasant future, never say die. Let me press you upon my heart, where I should like to have you forever.

Your loving

Will be with you by 7.30 P. M. tomorrow.

FRED.

F.

FORTISSIMO.

NEW YORK, Sept. 21, 1886.

MY DEAREST MINNIE: I am pencilling a few lines on my way down to business, at the rate of twenty-five miles an hour, and shall mail them to you as soon as I arrive at the store. Were the train running at a thousand miles' speed it would still be insufficient, comparing it with the giant's steps we have made, last evening, in spiritual progress and philosophy. How we will ever be able to repay you for all the knowledge we draw from your "laboratory" is a mystery to me, unless you consider our ardent love and admiration as a sufficient reward. My love and admiration are yours forever, and may I be crushed with infamy should I ever forget or ignore all that I owe to you. I am glad, also, to congratulate you upon the progress of your cabinet friends, who promise to surpass your anticipations provided the visitors' conditions furnish the proper materials.

Inclosed please find a slip of yesterday's *Tribune*. It is discouraging to see such results, but then, why do they not come to our school?

I must now abandon the divine and resume the material toil. I press you to my heart and cover your lips with a thousand tender kisses.

FRED.

P. S. If I should hear from you, separation will not seem long.

F.

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[FROM BOSTON HERALD.]

### FROM SPIRIT LAND.

THE HERALD GETS SOME SPECIAL DISPATCHES. — MRS. MAUDE JONES GILLETTE HANDLES THE SLATES. — NOTHING NEW IN HER METHOD OF WRITING MESSAGES. — ADROIT MANIPULATION AND SENSELESS ANSWERS. — SPIRITS WON'T REPLY UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS.

California "slate-writers" seem to have a peculiar affinity for Boston. During the past year the *Herald* exposed the operations of W. R. Colby, Baptist minister, mail-robber, and medium, and "Dr." D. J. Stansbury, the dispenser of spirit medicines, both of whom manipulated slates in their efforts to beguile the public, and had learned their "occult" art in the city of the Golden Gate.

A *Herald* man who has had some experience with California slate-writers arranged for a sitting with Mrs. Maude Jones Gillette, and stipulated that a friend be allowed to accompany him and be present at the seance. Each visitor provided himself with a pair of common slates measuring 11x8 inches, and at two o'clock one afternoon rang the bell at No. 27 Worcester Street. They were ushered into a long hall, with a door opening to the left into the room where the alleged marvels are performed.

When Mrs. Gillette had disposed her guests at points in the room satisfactory to herself, she stepped into the room back of the folding doors, and returned with a pile of slates under her arm, and placed them in a chair beside

her. These slates doubtless had "stock" spirit writings and pictures upon them, suited to fit the usual inquiries that are made in these seances.

The table at which the medium sat is a very high one, and has a dark cloth reaching half way to the floor. Mr. X. counted eight small slates on the table when the seekers after truth entered, and these were transferred to the chair at Mrs. Gillette's side before the sitting began. The sitter could not see them.

When the *Herald* representative's turn came to sit, he changed places with Mr. X., and, taking five folded slips from his pocket, laid them on the table. The slips bore questions plainly written in ink, and were addressed to spurious "spirits."

"You will have to copy those questions on my magnetized paper," said Mrs. Gillette, pointing to a number of nearly square pieces of paper, uniform in size, which were lying on the side of the table.

The investigator copied them and folded them three times.

Mrs. Gillette then seated herself at the table, with her back to the window, and, picking up one of the reporter's pellets, placed it between two slates.

"That is not the right one," she added, after a moment, and picked up all the sitter's questions in her right hand, for the purpose, as she claimed, of "magnetizing" them.

The medium replaced them in a pile on the table, and then carried her hand to her lap, out of sight of the sitter. It was clear that she substituted a pellet of her own, of the same size as those the visitor gave her. This done, she was ready to begin the slate-writing.

Just to see if the medium was at all "touchy" regarding the pile of pellets she had "magnetized" and placed on the table, the *Herald* representative began to turn them over with his left hand. The motion was made as slyly as possible, but Mrs. Gillette perceived the danger with wonderful quickness, and seized the bunch again for further "magnetizing." She was careful, however, to put them down next time farther out of the sitter's reach, on her left.

She sponged two of the slates on both sides with great ostentation, and then put them back in the chair at her side, at the same time executing a sleight of hand that brought another slate into her lap—out of sight of the sitter. She looked down into her lap, as if getting "spirit impressions," but could have been reading or writing, or both, for anything the visitor could see back of the high and heavily-draped table.

At this somewhat critical and delicate juncture Mr. Gillette began to talk, with a view of diverting the rather close scrutiny of the investigators. He told glibly of the people who had had sittings with this latest of wonderful "slate-writers," notably members of the new psychical society, such as Rev. Mr. Savage, Rabbi Schindler, Prof. Dolbear, Rev. Mr. Allen, Mrs. B. O. Flower, and others. He claimed that the phenomena exhibited by Mrs. Gillette had satisfied them all of her supernatural powers. Mrs. Gillette herself joined in the conversation, at the same time keeping her rocking chair in motion, because, as she said, it prevented the jerking she so much disliked when under control of the spirits.

All this confusing of the attention seemed to subserve a very beneficial purpose in producing the phenomena of "slate-writing."



Here Mrs. Gillette brought a slate upon the table, made a feint at sponging and drying it, holding it with one side toward herself. The cloth used in drying the slate is an important factor in gaining successful results. It is usually kept thrown over the back of the chair, where it serves to conceal the slates piled on the chair. Sometimes, to divert suspicion, the cloth is flung over her shoulder.

The slate, when dried, was turned down upon another slate, and the medium placed a pellet, apparently from the table, between them. She put a rubber band around the pair, and, laying them on the table, requested the visitor to put his hand upon them. She touched the slates to tell when the writing was concluded, and, after a brief interval, separated the slates.

Upon one was found a long "stock" or "property" communication, adapted to anybody, executed in fine, handsome penmanship, and containing forty-four words. Added to this, in the same handwriting, but scarcely legible, were sixteen words in answer to the *Herald* man's question. These last sixteen words were written in the medium's lap, and under the difficulties that have been described. The first question was:

"DEAR A—E: Are you with Sallie over there? and do you watch over and guide your father in his great loneliness?"

This was the answer received:

"I am here. You must give up more to the impressions we give you. Don't mistrust yourself so much. Other people are no better informed than you upon this subject, and many not so well. Bright Eyes is here, and loves you dearly. You must never be lonely, for we are ever about you. I love ————dearly.

"Your loving

A—E."

"A—e" can be seen any day on Tremont Street.

The "stock" communication ends with "loves you dearly," and the remainder was written under circumstances that made the word after "I love" illegible.

Another bit of spiritual correspondence ran as follows. This was the question:

"DEAR NIECE S: If here, will you give me a good test, that I may know it is you?"

The reply was this:

"We bring you beautiful flowers to make your life bright and happy. You know we love you and will ever be with you when you need or ask for us. I can't think of any special thing to prove it is I. S—N."

With this communication, on the top of the slate, was a female figure, with hands extended, as if scattering flowers. On the pellet S—n's surname was given, but written so illegibly the medium could not decipher it. She therefore wisely stopped at the Christian name, "S—n." "S—n" is no niece, and can be seen in Jamaica Plain any day.

This was another of the "stock" communications, with a few words in answer to the query added. The answer has nothing to do with the question until the last sentence is reached. Curiously enough, here is just where the good writing ends, and the wavering penmanship, in the same hand, begins.

The *Herald* man next grew reminiscent, and addressed a question to an "old acquaintance," who, by the way, can be seen almost any day near the Old

South, and isn't old at all. The query sent into the realms of spookdom was as follows :

"DEAR OLD FRIEND, W——G: Will the business scheme I have in hand turn out to my advantage?"

This encouraging answer came back :

"Yes ; we believe you will be successful.

M. G."

The error in the initials signed to the communication — "M. G." instead of "W. G." — Mrs. Gillette should not be blamed for, because the "W," the scribe is forced to admit, looked very much like an "M" in the question as written on the pellet.

The next answer proved to be another of the "stock" variety. Only the last sentence of the answer deals with the question, and then only in a vague way. The variation in the penmanship between the "general" and the "special" parts is as marked as ever. This was the question :

"DEAR S——J——: Are you with A—— on the other side?"

And this the reply :

"So many we could not tell you all in many sittings. You know we were a large family.

"Good-by."

S——J——.

The "good-by" means that your hour is up. It is rather curious that the spirits should be able to accommodate their work so perfectly to the financial rules of the medium ; but they do. "S——J——" can be seen in Dorchester at any time.

It now only remained for Mrs. Gillette to write some messages on a pair of slates the *Herald* man had brought with him. When the medium came to operate upon these slates she cleaned them again and again, rubbing them with her fingers, to "magnetize" them. She stood them on end with her left hand, her right hand disappeared from view, and four words were written without the slate going under the table. As the difficulties were greater than in any other test, so the four words written were more scrawly than any of the other writing. The penmanship, however, was clearly the same. The last question was :

"UNCLE JOSHUA: —Is Aunt Hannah with you? and will you give a message to your favorite nephew?"

Joshua's reply was short :

"We are both together.

"UNCLE J——."

The inquirer after spiritualistic truth never had an Uncle Joshua or an Aunt Hannah, and the names and the relationship were invented for the occasion.

In manipulating one of these pairs of slates Mrs. Gillette lifted the top slate so that the under surface could be seen by her and not by the sitter. This was done on the pretence of placing a pellet taken from the table between the slates.

It will be observed that all except the "stock" messages were short, and evidently written behind the table, in exactly the same style of writing as the



added sentences to the other messages. The female figures on some of the "stock" messages were drawn in colors, chiefly in gold.

Mrs. Gillette's methods vary but little from those of the other California "slate-writers," "Rev." Colby and "Dr." Stansbury. If she is to answer a question or give a name, the folded pellets must be read before the response is given. After this comes the skilful manipulation of the slates, as above described.

Mrs. Gillette claims her writing is produced without pencil or sound, but Mr. — distinctly heard the sound of pencils, and saw the medium substitute a pellet on one occasion. When his sitting was over he looked over the table and saw six slates in Mrs. Gillette's chair, and two were unused on the table. He took away three slates, and the *Herald* man five, so that Mrs. Gillette had at least fifteen slates for use during the sitting. In no instance did the answers show a particle of intelligence beyond what was gained by reading the pellets.

It is not to be supposed that all the members of the New Psychical Society have continued mystified. Its former president, Rev. Mr. Savage, was always a disbeliever, and by way of test he has recently sent an observing woman for a test seance. This lady stood up and looked over the table when the slates were being manipulated, and caught sight of one of the prepared slates with a "stock" message all written out. This satisfied her of the fraudulent nature of the alleged phenomena, and her discovery has been made known to several distinguished members of the New Psychical Society. It is expected that at the next meeting of the society a number of them will announce that they are no longer mystified by the operations of the latest "California slate-writer."

There are several ways in which a sitter can be sure not to get any slate-writing. Let him stand or sit on the same side of the table with the medium, so that her hands and manipulations of the slate can be seen at all stages of the performance. Another way is for the seeker after "spiritual" truth to take his own slates, put his question, plainly addressed to the spirits, between them, bind the mystic pair together with his own hands, and when he has placed them on the table simply insist that they be kept always in sight. If he is a patient man he will have an opportunity to test the limit of his special virtue before he secures an answer to his question through the phenomenon of "independent slate-writing."

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[FROM RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL.]

ETTA ROBERTS.

NEWTON'S LAST STAR EXPOSED.

When Eliza Ann Wells was being starred as a crucial test materializing medium by Henry J. Newton, a woman going by the name of Etta Roberts sometimes figured. She was one of those who assisted Wells when exposed by Mr. W. R. Tice at the house of Mr. Newton. After the decline of Wells, through her repeated exposures and final disastrous failure in the attempt at bluffing the editor of *The Journal*, in which Newton was her champion, she left New York. Then it became important for Mr. Newton to have another

materializing star, and Etta Roberts was selected. Mr. Newton has been exploiting her for two years, as he did Mrs. Wells before her. He has talked buncombe for the benefit of reporters of daily papers, and seemingly been as devoted to his last favorite as to her predecessor. A new cabinet had been constructed and largely advertised as a fraud-proof affair, and the "crucial" business was on the eve of inauguration when suddenly, and without warning, Mr. Newton again found himself in a painfully ridiculous position.

On last Friday night Roberts held a seance in her apartments. It was not called a "crucial" affair, but scientist Newton was on hand, with some twenty other observers. The show began at 8.15 o'clock, and Roberts masqueraded in different characters for about an hour. Then she came out as Florence, the lately deceased daughter of Mr. Newton, and after kissing and embracing him took him through the folding doors into the back room, where they remained about five minutes. Returning to the front room she was supported on his arm. While in the dark back room she had managed to get a confederate, in the person of a child, under her skirts, and by coming in slowly got him into the cabinet. But in coming through the folding doors she had to squeeze past the persons at the end of the circle, and one of them discovered the addition to the procession. After this, two "spirits" would appear. Sometimes the boy confederate would come out under Roberts' dress, and while she was ostensibly pulling lace off the floor he would pop out and up. The seance dragged on for nearly three hours; plenty of "spirits," plenty of phosphorus stuff and lace. The trouble was, Roberts could not get the boy into the back room again, as the door was closely guarded by the one who had detected the introduction of the child. Finally Roberts called up a confederate from the circle—there is nearly always a confederate mixed in with the sitters in these shows. A little more light was asked for, and Dr. M. L. Holbrook turned on a full blaze, then turned it down, but not so low but that sitters could distinctly see. The confederate who had been called from the circle conducted the boy confederate out of the room in full sight of all, but instead of bringing him back, left him in the other room behind the bed. It had to be done this way, for the conspirators were in a straight, and if audacity would not save an exposure, nothing could. Dr. Holbrook promptly went into the back room, the boy ran to him and was led into the seance room. As soon as in the seance room the boy rushed to Roberts—his supposed mother—who hid him behind her and sat down in the cabinet, immovable, threatening to kill any one who touched her. In the confusion the male confederate who had sat in the circle disappeared and was not identified.

"It was pitiable in the extreme," writes one who was present. "Poor Newton still insists she can give genuine manifestations and under test conditions and he will prove it, but he admitted last night it was a deception." Here is the same old trick which Wells worked on Newton, and which she admitted to Mr. C. D. Lakey. Is it not about time to stop pitying Mr. Newton, at least until his sanity has been judicially passed upon and he is legally declared *non compos mentis*? If he is of sound mind then he is not entitled to pity but to the execrations of all decent people. To a rational mind it is inconceivable that Newton, who knows Roberts well, could have been deluded into believing the creature who embraced him and led him into the dark bedroom was his darling daughter whose familiar voice was so lately stilled by



death—not unless he is insane. Wilful obstinacy has made men insane before now. In the interests of his family, and those of the public, is it not time Mr. Newton's mental condition were made the subject of judicial inquiry?

[FROM THE BOSTON HERALD.]

## NAMES WRITTEN IN THE AIR.

### HOW A CALIFORNIA MEDIUM HAS DUPED BOSTONIANS.

Mrs. Ada Foye, heralded as a distinguished spiritualist from the Pacific coast, came to Boston about three or four months ago, and under the auspices of the Spiritualistic Phenomena Society has been giving tests and seances at Lyceum Hall, No. 1031 Washington Street, before large and extremely profitable audiences. Here is an excerpt from one of her advertisements :

"In the evening Mrs. Foye will give one of her wonderful seances, proving by unmistakable evidence the continuity of life beyond the grave, by the rapping, writing, hearing and seeing of our spirit friends, through her wonderful mediumship. This spiritual teacher tells us there is no death, but life everlasting,—conscious life ; that our loved ones can and do come back ; that they manifest their presence to you by giving their names, ages, diseases, date, etc. Come and verify it. Come early. Excellent music."

Thursday evening a well-known business man of this city attended one of her seances and secured ample proof of the shallowness of her pretensions to reveal the "continuity of life beyond the grave." Mrs. Foye made an address and requested those present to write the names of friends in spiritland on slips of paper and drop them into a hat that was passed around for the purpose. They were collected, and the medium announced that she would simply give what messages she obtained from such spirits as happened to be present. A number of the slips were so loosely folded that the name could be read at a glance. They were scattered out in a heap on a table on the platform, the latter meanwhile being vacated by everybody except Mrs. Foye. The table was then moved forward towards the light and the tests began.

Mrs. Foye presently relapsed into a semi-trancelike condition, passing her hand across her brow several times. At last she spoke : "Now I see a name in the air. There is a bright light, and they are writing a name. Wait, I will tell you in a minute. Yes, its Fannie—F a n n i e (spelling it out)—Fannie F—r. Is that for you?" pointing to Mr. C—s, the investigator, who was on his feet. "Did you know the party when living?"

"Yes," answered the skeptic, "Will you give me the age at which she died?"

Medium Foye in reply murmured, "66, 65, (then two raps), 64 (two additional raps)—between 64 and 65. Is that correct?"

Investigator C—s bowed and asked, "Of what did she die? Consumption?" Medium : "No." Investigator : "Diphtheria?" Medium : "No." Investigator : "Dropsy?" Medium : "No." Investigator : "Combination of diseases?" Medium : "Yes. Is that correct?" The investigator did not reply but put another question : "Do you see anything else?" Medium : "Oh, now I see the light. Yes, she had liver trouble, rheumatism and dropsy. Is that correct?" The investigator did not answer, for the simple reason that the person whom the medium and himself were discussing was

still a very lively and vivacious inhabitant of this terrestrial sphere. His next query was : " Has the spirit any message for me ? " " I will see," remarked Mrs. Foye, " wait a moment." She then made several rapid movements with a pencil and read from a slip of paper ; " We in spirit life approve of your course. Some condemn, but we approve. Always live up to your highest light and God will reward you. You will yet have all the evidence you need on this subject. Continue your investigations and your reward will be great."

The gentleman resumed his seat, and Medium Foye dilated on her success with the investigator who was unknown to her. This was the *modus operandi* in every case. The gentleman who was investigating had three tests of Medium Foye's supernatural (?) power, and the three names represented three living persons.

NOTE.—Mrs. Foye is a medium of the tramp variety, who professes to get names of deceased friends of persons in her audiences by reading the folded papers stealthily. On one occasion, a visitor folded his paper loosely, and it was passed into the audience by Mrs. Foye, while she read the name "in the air." The paper happened to be handed to the very man who wrote it, and he found it had been refolded and pinched up by Mrs. Foye, showing conclusively that she had been handling it fraudulently.



"I left the place with mingled feelings of disgust, pity and indignation.

"Disgust at the vulgarity of the whole performance. Pity, because several persons seemed to believe that all was genuine, one old gentleman wiping his eyes as he took his seat, after having been called to the cabinet to talk with his wife; and indignation that any woman can sink so low as to be willing to make her living and that of the wretch, her assistant, by thus duping people through the tenderest affections.

"I do not believe in arbitrary punishment for sin, but if I did I should say that such a person as I see every reason to believe that the medium is, should be tarred and feathered and held up to public scorn and shame. She is worse than a pickpocket, worse than a woman who lives by open licentiousness. She is so bad that we can only think of her with loathing.

HUGH O. PENTECOST."

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