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FORTUNE TELLING

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

U.S. Congress House
SUBCOMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY OF THE
COMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SIXTY-NINTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

ON

H. R. 8989

FEBRUARY 26, MAY 18, 20, AND 21, 1926



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COMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SIXTY-NINTH CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

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FRANK R. REID.	RALPH GILBERT.
ROBERT G. HOUSTON,	WILLIAM C. HAMMER.
HENRY B. RATHBONE.	

FORTUNE TELLING

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE COMMITTEE
ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
Friday, February 26, 1926.

The subcommittee met at 10.30 o'clock a. m., Hon. Clarence J. McLeod (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

The subcommittee thereupon proceeded to the consideration of H. R. 8989, which is as follows:

A BILL Amending subchapter 5 of the Code of Law of the District of Columbia, as amended to June 7, 1924, relating to offenses against public policy

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That subchapter 5 of the Code of Law for the District of Columbia, as amended to June 7, 1924, relating to offenses against public policy, be, and the same is hereby, amended by adding thereto a new section, as follows:

"Any person pretending to tell fortunes for reward or compensation where lost or stolen goods may be found; any person who, by game or device, sleight of hand, pretending, fortune telling, or by any trick or other means, by the use of cards or other implements or instruments, fraudulently obtains from another person money or property or reward, property of any description; any person pretending to remove spells, or to sell charms for protection, or to unite the separated, shall be considered a disorderly person. Any person violating the provisions of this law shall be punished by a fine not to exceed \$250 or by imprisonment not to exceed six months, or by both such fine and imprisonment."

Mr. McLEOD. The committee will come to order. These ladies are here on this juror bill and Mr. Bloom is here on his bill on clairvoyance, and he has one witness, who is expected to be here, and Mr. Bloom claims he can discuss his matter in about 20 minutes.

Mr. BLOOM. The bill is very clear, states just what it is intended to say; there can not be any argument on the bill.

(An informal discussion took place at this point.)

STATEMENT OF HON. SOL BLOOM, REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK

Mr. BLOOM. Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I present for your consideration bill H. R. 8989, "A bill amending subchapter 5 of the Code of Law of the District of Columbia, as amended to June 7, 1924, relating to offenses against the public policy."

(Mr. Bloom thereupon read H. R. 8989 to the committee, which has been heretofore inserted in full in this hearing.)

Mr. HAMMER. One minute, Mr. Chairman. I don't want to be misunderstood. My prejudices are for the bill.

Mr. BLOOM. Then I will talk to your prejudices.

Mr. HAMMER. I am for this or similar legislation.

Mr. BLOOM. This says, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, that any person pretending to tell fortunes, or any person pretending to tell where lost or stolen goods may be found, or by sleight of hand, pretending, fortune telling, or by any trick or other means, by the use of cards—this is not against the Spiritualist religion in any way. This merely says that the abuse that exists now—that is, the condition that exists now in the District of Columbia of allowing a person to obtain a license to do these things, that are considered nothing else but fraud—shall be guilty of this crime of disorderly conduct. The statute of the State of New York says, “Who are disorderly persons: Persons pretending to tell fortunes, or where lost or stolen goods may be found,” are disorderly persons.

Mr. HOUSTON. Right there, Mr. Bloom, it occurs to me there is a word left out of that seventh line there. The sense is not very clear—“any person pretending to tell fortunes where lost or stolen goods may be found”—“or” ought to be there, or “whereby.”

Mr. BLOOM. I copied this just exactly from the Senate bill. I didn’t look it over before I introduced it here.

Mr. HOUSTON. While we are on that, I happen to notice, too, over on the second page, line 2, it strikes me that comma after “protection” should come out, “or to sell charms for protection or to units,”

Mr. BLOOM. Yes; it ought to be.

Mr. HAMMER. The comma ought to be out.

Mr. BLOOM. From Gilbert’s Criminal Code, 1923, I will read to the committee:

Fortune telling. The pretense of occult powers and the ability to answer confidential questions from spiritual aid is as bad as fortune telling is and species of it and is a fraud upon the public. (*Fay v. Lambourne*, 1908, 124 App. Div. No. 245-108, New York.)

Subdivision 3 of this section, making one a disorderly person who pretends to tell fortunes, is not unconstitutional, upon the ground that it deprives the defendant of the exercise and enjoyment of her religion, profession, and worship, in violation of article 1, section 3, of the State constitution, and in violation of the Constitution of the United States. Where the defendant denied that she was a fortune teller or pretended to tell fortunes, and claimed that she was the president and a minister of the Brooklyn Spiritualist Society, and that she simply gave the complaining witness—

Advice, and summoned departed spirits to aid her in answering the complainant’s questions, it was held that the evidence was sufficient to justify a finding that the defendant was guilty of telling fortunes, in violation of the statute, thereby constituting her a disorderly person. (*People v. Ashley*, 1918, 184 App. Div. 520, 172, New York Supp. 282.)

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I am just trying to bring this fortune-telling proposition to a basis where it can be properly regulated; and if any people are found who do anything contained in the bill, we ask that they be considered disorderly persons. That is all there is to it.

Mr. HOUSTON. Mr. Bloom, there is one thing that is not clear in my mind. Do you wish to prohibit the telling of fortunes?

Mr. BLOOM. Yes, sir.

Mr. REID. All of them?

Mr. BLOOM. Yes, sir; all fortunes.

Mr. HOUSTON. That is, "any person pretending to tell fortunes"?

Mr. BLOOM. Yes.

Mr. HOUSTON. Or "where lost or stolen goods may be found"?

Mr. BLOOM. Yes.

Mr. HOUSTON. That seems to be the only portion of your bill that applies directly. Now, the next clause seems to be really the obtaining of goods through such machinations, we will say; and the third is "any person pretending to remove spells" and "sell charms" shall be considered a disorderly person"? I haven't got that clear in my mind is the reason I ask the question.

Mr. BLOOM. The idea of giving advice is one thing; the idea of telling a fortune is another.

Mr. REID. What is telling a fortune?

Mr. BLOOM. Well, telling a fortune is to make people believe what the future is, to give you a picture that you are going to marry a blond.

Mr. REID. How do you know you won't?

Mr. BLOOM. I want to tell you something: I am serious about this thing, and I don't want any kidding or joking from you.

Mr. REID. That is the sad part of it.

Mr. RATHBONE. I would like to ask the gentleman a question.

Mr. BLOOM. Yes, sir.

Mr. RATHBONE. The second paragraph is divided by a semicolon twice; the first two lines are "any person pretending to tell fortunes where lost or stolen goods may be found." Does that mean simply to tell a fortune without seeking to make any money or obtain property or material advantage by doing it—the mere telling of a fortune, without any financial gain being involved, that that is to be considered a misdemeanor?

Mr. BLOOM. Yes.

Mr. RATHBONE. It does mean that?

Mr. BLOOM. Yes; because they do not do it without some compensation of some kind, or some consideration.

Mr. HOUSTON. Mr. Bloom, you know they have a habit of telling fortunes in the best homes. I have been in well-regulated households, so far as that is concerned, where somebody will take cards just for the amusement of it and say, "I will tell your fortune from the cards."

Mr. BLOOM. That is not a business. The thing that I object to is that the District of Columbia to-day, the way I understand it, for the sum of \$25 will give you a license to make a business of telling fortunes, etc., which is a fraud.

Mr. RATHBONE. Have you the statute before you to which this is an amendment?

Mr. BLOOM. No; I have been looking it up. I just heard about this meeting last night and I got these things together in a hurry.

Mr. RATHBONE. Have you examined and gone into the law in the District of Columbia on the subject of obtaining money under false pretenses, or cheating, etc., and is it not possible that this subject matter is all satisfactorily covered or, reasonably so, by existing law? You do not pretend to have studied the law of the District so as to know?

Mr. BLOOM. I would say, gentlemen, yes; that would be so in business transactions, where you were defrauded. But this is a case where people receive a license from the District of Columbia to do this kind of business, that is, transact this kind of business.

Mr. RATHBONE. Is there anything about a license here?

Mr. BLOOM. No, but they are selling licenses now for the sum of \$25.

Mr. HAMMER. The license is a permit, but not to commit crime.

Mr. BLOOM. Yes. Now, I want to do away with that.

Mr. McLEOD. You also do away with any amusement in the home—"where lost or stolen goods may be found." You say whether for gain or not, that applies?

Mr. BLOOM. I say this, that the fortune telling at home is merely for pastime or as a joke. You are not allowed to play cards on the outside, but you play cards at home. That does not apply.

But it is to pretend that you are doing something for the people who come to you for aid, making a business of it, that should be considered illegal; it should be considered illegal because what you are doing and pretending to do is for gain and for profit, and trying to mislead people who believe in these things, or think they believe in them; that should be considered a misdemeanor.

Mr. HAMMER. Mr. Bloom, may I inquire if it would affect your bill disastrously to put after the word "fortunes," in line 7 "for reward or compensation"?

Mr. BLOOM. I have no objection to that.

Mr. HAMMER. I am not saying that you have. I asked you the question.

Mr. BLOOM. No.

Mr. HAMMER. Then, on page 2—I have not studied your bill, Mr. Bloom—

Mr. REID. I do not think the bill is in proper form, and I think somebody ought to look over it.

Mr. BLOOM. I would say to Mr. Reid that this is a copy of the bill in the Senate, and I understand they are going to hold hearings on this this afternoon before the Senate committee.

Mr. REID. That does not make it good over here.

Mr. BLOOM. You learned lawyers on the committee will be able to tell.

Mr. REID. It is in very bad form at the present time.

Mr. BLOOM. That is your opinion of the bill.

Mr. HAMMER. May I inquire, further, Mr. Bloom, for my information? On page 2, line 1—look at your bill—wouldn't it be better to have it worded somewhat in this way, after "person," the first word in that line, insert "money, or property, or reward or compensation in any manner whatever," leaving out "of any description"? I am just asking if you don't think it would be more comprehensive. I am not criticizing your bill, because I have not studied it enough to be able to do it.

Mr. McLEOD. Are there any further questions?

Mr. REID. What further question is there?

Mr. McLEOD. I don't know. Are there any further questions?

Mr. BLOOM. I would say to the committee, this: That I would like very much to get into the record, if I can, the statement of the people who were to have been here this morning but could not do so; we did not learn anything about this hearing until last night; late. As a meeting is going to be held at 2 o'clock over in the Senate, and I would like to have the testimony of that hearing embodied with this hearing here.

Mr. HAMMER. If we are going to do that, we ought to have a joint hearing.

Mr. BLOOM. That is why I asked to have it inserted with this, or our hearing inserted there.

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, on the several questions that were asked me about these things, I would just like to have Mr. Houdini make a statement. He came in special and just got off the train, and I would like to have Mr. Houdini make a short statement about this bill.

Mr. HAMMER. May I inquire who he is and if he is not an astrologist.

Mr. BLOOM. You may inquire of Mr. Houdini.

Mr. HAMMER. I am asking you. I don't want anybody to come before this committee unless he can explain what his mission is.

Mr. BLOOM. I think Mr. Houdini has a perfect right to appear before this committee. You have no right to inquire who a man is.

Mr. HAMMER. I have a right, if I invite him.

Mr. BLOOM. This is my bill, Mr. Chairman, and I am entitled to some consideration as a Member of Congress, to have my witnesses appear before this committee according to the card sent out, and who are here on this bill.

Mr. HOUSTON. To bring the matter to a conclusion, I move that Mr. Houdini be heard.

Mr. HAMMER. I suggest that the gentleman don't seem to know what the rules of the committee are, that he be permitted to file with the chairman of the committee the names of the witnesses he desires, what their occupation in life is and designating who they are, and then we will consider what their qualifications are when they come before us.

Mr. BLOOM. There is nothing in the rules of the committee to suggest such a thing.

Mr. REID. Mr. Chairman, as a substitute, I move that Mr. Houdini be invited to address the committee on this subject.

Mr. HOUSTON. I had already made the same motion.

Mr. HAMMER. I want to learn—

Mr. BLOOM. I learn from people who have ability and brains. If I don't know the facts I don't know how to treat a difficult thing.

Mr. HAMMER. My motion is that the gentleman furnish a list to the committee, either verbally or in writing, of the witnesses that he desires to come before the committee, and I will leave off what their occupation is, if they are ashamed of it.

(Thereupon informal discussion took place which the reporter did not record.)

Mr. BLOOM. I submit that such a proceeding is entirely out of order. There is nothing in the rules of the committee to warrant it.

Mr. HAMMER. I vote that the gentleman be discussing this instead of lecturing us what our duties are.

Mr. BLOOM. I am the witness here before this committee, and I say there is nothing in the rules exacting anything of the kind.

Mr. RATHBONE. Mr. Chairman, I do not understand that the two motions are in conflict. I am sure Congressman Bloom has no objection whatever to filing a list of the names of the people whom he desires to appear, and I think also we might proceed perfectly agreeable to the rules and hear Mr. Houdini.

Mr. HAMMER. I will withdraw my motion.

Mr. RATHBONE. I move now, as the other motion is withdrawn, that we vote upon the motion of the Congressman from Delaware to hear Mr. Houdini.

Mr. McLEOD. The motion of the gentleman from Delaware is that we proceed to hear Mr. Houdini. Is there any objection?

(The motion prevailed.)

Mr. HAMMER. Now, I would like to say we ought to have some conception of how many witnesses the proponents desire, in order to determine the length of our hearings.

(Thereupon informal discussion took place which the reporter did not record.)

STATEMENT OF HARRY HOUDINI, NEW YORK CITY

Mr. McLEOD. What is your full name?

Mr. HOUDINI. My name is Harry Houdini.

Mr. McLEOD. What is your business?

Mr. HOUDINI. I am an author; I am a psychic investigator for the scientific magazines of the world; and then I am a mysterious entertainer.

Mr. McLEOD. How long have you been a mysterious entertainer?

Mr. HOUDINI. About 40 years.

Mr. McLEOD. Do you care to make a general statement? I understand you are a proponent of this bill, 8989.

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes, sir.

Mr. McLEOD. You may proceed to make a general statement.

Mr. HOUDINI. This is positively no attack upon a religion. Please understand that, emphatically. I am not attacking a religion. I respect every genuine believer in spiritualism or any other religion, as long as it does not conflict with the laws of the country or the laws of humanity.

But this thing they call "spiritualism," wherein a medium intercommunicates with the dead, is a fraud from start to finish. There are only two kinds of mediums, those who are mental degenerates and who ought to be under observation, and those who are deliberate cheats and frauds. I would not believe a fraudulent medium under oath; perjury means nothing to them.

You take a man or woman in an insane asylum and they do not know what they are talking about. How can you call it "religion" when you get men and women in a room together and feel each other's hands and bodies? The inspirational mediums are not quite as bad as that. But they guess, and by fishing methods and by reading the obituary notices get the neurotics to believe that they hear voices and see forms.

In 35 years I have never seen one genuine medium. Millions of dollars are stolen every year in America, and the Government have never paid any attention to it, because they look upon it as a religion. Sara Winchester spent \$5,000,000; the celebrated judge of New York, Edmonds, spent all his fortune; Professor Hare, of Yale College, heard voices and saw forms, and stated a lead pencil stood upright on the table and wrote messages, and answered questions.

Mr. RATHBONE. May I ask Mr. Houdini a question? Have you examined this bill before us carefully?

Mr. HOUDINI. I have read it through eight or nine times.

Mr. RATHBONE. This particular bill is what this committee has before it, and not, of course, you will realize, the general subject of spiritualism. Is there anything in this bill that deals with spiritualism?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes.

Mr. RATHBONE. That is, a fair interpretation of its language could be applied to spiritualism? If so, will you be good enough to point it out to me?

Mr. HOUDINI. Well, under the guise of medium, shall they tell fortunes? I believe—I am not sure that the law here gives clairvoyants license but not mediums. And you can be ordained as a minister of spiritualism—

Mr. RATHBONE. Do you distinguish between the two?

Mr. HOUDINI. Mediums are clairvoyants, but that is the way to beat the law. A medium can practice where a clairvoyant can not. But there should not be a distinction. (Imitating medium:) "There's a head comes to me, a big man with a Confederate uniform and cap on." That is their way of telling things; they don't charge you any fixed price, but they beat it by taking donations.

In New York that is how the mediums work. They pretend that they are looking into the past and the future by mediumship, just the same as when the medium is arrested, they go before the magistrate and say "I am the Rev. Josie Sherman; I am an ordained minister;" and the magistrate does not know that you can be illiterate and yet be an ordained minister. You need not study; you don't have to go to school to be a reverend. One of my investigators had been ordained six times and is a pastor twice. And I would like to tell you in front of every one that in many towns the men are degenerates. When they have the women in the room—I have it all under oath—they get the women alone, and they put their hands all over their bodies. I have examined 300 mediums, and this town is the worst I have ever struck.

Mr. REID. Washington, you mean?

Mr. HOUDINI. Washington, absolutely. Selling lucky charms: If you want sworn affidavits, about some of the men degenerates here I will be glad to let you have them. They tell you how to win back your lover. I picked up a paper on the street, or bought it at the station, where some woman, Leonora—I don't know whether she was investigated by my investigators or not but you can read everything to come about loved ones. It tells you all about love. And they do it under the cloak of religion.

The first thing they do is to get approval out of the Bible. But there is not a thing in the Bible that tells you that the dead can come

back—the spirit and the angel. I believe in spirits; they are not dead, and angels never die. There are so many things that they pick up in the Bible and point it out. I will guarantee that if you will give me any passage in the Bible and just let me interpret it, and I will prove it does not mean a thing in spiritualism. Their only hiding place is behind the Bible. But I don't care what passage you bring, I will give you an interpretation that shows it has not a thing to do with some one in human form who came back.

The Bible states about the spirit, like the transfiguration. That took place in full light, not like the witch in a dark, dirty place.

Here in Washington I believe I spent at least \$2,000 in buying lucky charms. Every medium with a few exceptions would sell my investigators lucky charms. I have them all and will let you have them; and they all claim that they are mediums.

Mr. RATHBONE. Mr. Houdini, the point I am trying to make is this: You are attacking spiritualism?

Mr. HOUDINI. No.

Mr. RATHBONE. You are attacking the practice of occultism?

Mr. HOUDINI. No, I am attacking fraudulent mediums. If there are any genuine mediums I have never met one.

Mr. HAMMER. I understood you to say that all spiritualist mediums are frauds. I think you are correct.

Mr. HOUDINI. I do think so.

Mr. HAMMER. Spiritualism is under the guise of religion, and it is mighty difficult for us to legislate about it and I oppose legislative restrictions as to matters of conscience.

Mr. HOUDINI. Then. I will say that in 35 years every one that has practiced as a medium is a fraud.

Mr. GILBERT. I concede all that. But, what is the use of us legislating about it.

Mr. HOUDINI. You will stop people being robbed under the guise of mediumship and they will simply have to take donations. One woman asked \$500 for a lucky charm right here in Washington.

Mr. GILBERT. You believe the old adage of Solomon which said "A fool and his money are soon parted?"

Mr. HOUDINI. I believe it is time to try to do something in this regard.

Mr. GILBERT. There is nothing in this bill about the "charm."

Mr. HOUDINI. A fool resorts to it. If you were to die and your wife went to a medium, they would rob her of every penny by claiming to bring your spirit back.

Mr. RATHBONE. I don't say that this bill deals with what is known as spiritualism or mediums in the ordinary acceptation of those terms, and if you would be good enough—we want light—to point out that portion of the bill that you think does deal with that particular subject, I would be obliged to you.

Mr. HOUDINI. It says "pretending, fortune telling, or by any trick or other means, by the use of cards or other implements or instruments, fraudulently obtains from another person property of any description; any person pretending to remove spells."

Mr. RATHBONE. Do you think that is spiritualism?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes, sir. If they are not mediums they can not practice. At least, it is a step toward progress.

Mr. REID. I would like to have you tell about the conditions in Washington. This bill applies to Washington, and if there is something that is not right it ought to be removed.

Mr. HOUDINI. In this town at \$25 you are licensing blackmailing, to rob, and to steal, under the clairvoyant license, and it is under that authority—I had the number when I was here—60,000 or 70,000 girls, the great majority of whom, when they come into a medium's place are shown a license hanging on the wall, and the poor girls think that means it is authenticated by the Government. They don't realize that that only means a license. Mediums say, "There you are. If I was not genuine I could not get a license."

Mr. GILBERT. Would the gentleman be so cruel as to deprive a blushing young girl of 15 or 16 and a country swain of paying a dime and getting a picture of their future sweetheart, or be told he is "going on a long journey"? Do you think it is a matter for us to go into?

Mr. HOUDINI. I will show you murders and suicides, and where a medium has called a number of old men and women to finish their lives in order to join their friends. Why license a thief? You let them do it and get away with it; but why license it?

Mr. McLEOD. It is possible to have a genuine clairvoyant, is it not?

Mr. HOUDINI. It is impossible, I claim. I will give \$10,000 to any clairvoyant in the world that will do one test.

Mr. REID. What is the test?

Mr. HOUDINI. Any test I want them to do.

Mr. REID. Let us get the \$10,000.

Mr. HOUDINI. Unfortunately I didn't bring it with me. But I can telegraph for the money, if you wish.

Mr. McLEOD. There are witnesses here.

Mr. HOUDINI. They will say under oath and swear to it; I tell you I would not believe a clairvoyant or fraudulent medium under oath, so help me God.

Mr. McLEOD. Would you by proof?

Mr. HOUDINI. By proof, yes; certainly by proof.

Mr. McLEOD. Here is a witness that can prove it.

Mr. REID. How long have you been fighting them?

Mr. HOUDINI. About 35 years.

Mr. REID. Have you been fairly successful?

Mr. HOUDINI. I have had more mediums arrested in two years than have been arrested in seventy, because I know their tricks; I know how to catch them.

Mr. HOUSTON. You have never tried to catch them on a test, have you?

Mr. HOUDINI. On a test? [Turning to the audience.] Tell me the name my mother called me when I was born? [No response.] Tell me the pet name my father used to call me? [No response.]

(At this point Mr. Houdini threw on the committee table the crumpled piece of paper.)

Mr. HOUSTON. We ought to know something about the subject matter.

Mr. HOUDINI. You asked for a test?

Mr. HOUSTON. Sure.

Mr. HOUDINI. Here is a telegram [turning to the audience]. Read that, you clairvoyant mediums and show me up. Tell the contents of that telegram. [No response.]

Mr. REID. I will tell you what it says: "Please send more money."

Mr. HOUDINI. Does anybody want to read that wire?

Mr. REID. I have made a guess.

Mr. HOUDINI. She [indicating one of the audience] is a clairvoyant.

Mr. REID. I said, "Please send more money."

Mr. HOUDINI. You can make your own deduction. That is just what it is. You are not a clairvoyant?

Mr. REID. Oh, yes; I am. [Laughter.]

Mr. HOUDINI. All right, if you are a clairvoyant, tell me what this wire is. Go ahead. [Producing another telegram.]

Mr. REID. It is asking if it didn't come?

Mr. HOUDINI. No, sir. Everybody guesses at it.

Mr. GILBERT. I raise the point of order that the gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. REID. I move that his time be extended five minutes. I want to know more about it.

Mr. HAMMER. Mr. Houdini is an enthusiast, and he is what you might call an extremist. I am the son of a Methodist minister, and I agree with him. I am bound to, if I follow my "raising." Soothsayers and fortune tellers are not to my liking, and I have no confidence in them. But it seems to me that if this bill means what you say it means, I am like Mr. Gilbert, but I am not in favor of shutting him off.

Mr. BLOOM. Mr. Houdini came a great way, and I think he ought to be heard.

Mr. GILBERT. I believe absolutely in what the gentleman says, but we are here to pass an act of Congress, and we are making ourselves ridiculous with this bill. This bill would prevent children taking a deck of cards and sitting around home and telling fortunes.

Mr. REID. As Methodists we are against them.

Mr. GILBERT. I believe in Santa Claus and I believe in fairies, in a way, and the gentleman is taking the matter entirely too seriously. And these other witnesses are here on a matter of real importance, on this jury bill. We are not going to bring in on the floor of the House any bill having to do with the telling of fortunes, and, as I said, would you be so cruel as to deprive a young country fellow of the pleasure of getting a picture of his sweetheart or being told he is "going on a long journey," and all that frivolous stuff?

Mr. HOUDINI. You are wrong in your statement. Pardon me. You go to those people that charge \$500 and they say, "Woman, you have been intimate with a certain man." You are preventing blackmail; you are not stopping little children from enjoying themselves with innocent pastime.

Mr. GILBERT. I am with you on that proposition in reference to obtaining money under false pretenses and there is a law that will cover that. We do not want to bring in a bill that will go into these frivolous matters covered by this bill.

Mr. RATHBONE. Will the gentleman yield a moment? I would like to say to my good friend from New York [Mr. Bloom] in all sincerity, that I am convinced, of course, that there is a real evil in certain cases. But I don't think that this bill as drafted is going to reach just the men you want to reach, and if I might make bold to offer a suggestion, I should think really that the bill should be redrafted before you attempt to cover just what Mr. Houdini has in mind. I don't think your bill will cover the point.

Mr. HOUDINI. May I explain this?

Mr. REID. What is the motion the gentleman would make?

Mr. GILBERT. My motion is that we lay this whole matter on the table.

Mr. HAMMER. You know what high regard I have for not only the ability, character, and fairness of the gentleman from Kentucky. But suppose we were to do what he wants us to do—it would encourage every scoundrel and every perpetrator of fraud, both men and women, in this city to go in their nefarious employment and say that Congress is not going to interfere or prevent that kind of robbery, and it is a mistake. Mr. Gilbert is a man personally who is above reproach, as well as possessing great ability for clear thinking. But he is disgusted with it because he is an old-time Jeffersonian Democrat.

Mr. BLOOM. I think I am entitled to just a little consideration. I want to have that motion put, because I want to find out whether or not the Congress and the committees of Congress are going to give some protection to the people of the District of Columbia that need protection. It is the people who need it, and if we are not going to give it, all right.

Mr. GILBERT. Let me call the attention of the gentleman from New York to the fact that this bill does not cover that proposition. His bill is "Any person pretending to tell fortunes where lost or stolen goods may be found, or any person or any child who, by means of a deck of cards device, pretends fortune telling by any trick or other means by the use of cards, or other implements or instruments, fraudulently obtains property from another person is committing a violation of law."

Mr. BLOOM. The gentleman didn't say that in his motion. The gentleman says if anyone wants to do that and wants to pay 10 cents for a picture of her sweetheart or get other information that is going to get some enjoyment or pleasure, let them do it.

Mr. GILBERT. They can not do it if this bill becomes a law.

Mr. BLOOM. Just a minute. They are taking \$10,000 or \$50,000 away from them under the pretense of being a fortune teller.

Mr. RATHBONE. Will the gentleman from Kentucky yield?

Mr. GILBERT. Yes.

Mr. RATHBONE. Will the gentleman not permit us to continue the hearing in order to give opportunity for others to be heard when we have more time, and possibly, if our friend from New York saw fit to do so, to redraft the bill?

Mr. GILBERT. If any member of the committee wants to go ahead with this ridiculous proposition, I have no objection.

Mr. BLOOM. This bill has been held constitutional by the State of New York.

Mr. GILBERT. Constitutional, but ridiculous.

Mr. RATHBONE. I suggest that we do not pass upon this matter finally but that it be continued until a later time.

Mr. REID. I move consideration of my original motion to give the gentleman 10 minutes more.

(Thereupon informal discussion took place, which was not recorded.)

Mr. REID. Will you confine your statement in regard to Washington?

Mr. HOUDINI. This bill is no attack against spiritualism. This bill, as near as I can understand it, is to prevent anyone under any pretense whatsoever of robbing the public. There have been millions of dollars taken from unsuspecting persons by these people; for example, the Clara Barton case, involving \$70,000, which four weeks ago was decided against the medium. The lady told me she was not a medium.

Mr. REID. Is that a Washington case?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes; and I have the case here. I have the record here. May I consult it?

Mr. REID. Yes; certainly.

Mr. HOUDINI. I want to go on record as not attacking a religion, but as attacking a medium who is ordained and is a minister of spiritualism, whereas if they have a law like this a medium could not make any money under the guise of religion.

Mr. REID. What do you have to do to become a minister?

Mr. HOUDINI. Nothing. To be a spiritualistic minister you must pretend to see forms and hear voices, and then you are ordained.

Mr. REID. Don't you ever see things?

Mr. HOUDINI. Not imaginary or have hallucinations.

Mr. REID. The lady there says it is not so.

Mr. HOUDINI. It may not be so; but here is my evidence. It is true and here are my investigators. Here is an ordained minister of spiritualism, and he will come right in town and they get the money through the people.

Mr. REID. I thought this phrase: "Any person pretending to tell fortunes for reward or compensation where lost or stolen goods may be found," was interfering with the police department getting a reward.

Mr. HOUDINI. Oh, no. Here are the letters. [Producing roll of cloth 50 feet long on which was pasted photostat copies of letters, ordinations, and certificates of churches.] All of these are ordinations, and with one of these they say, "I am an ordained minister of spiritualism," and they practice clairvoyance.

Mr. REID. Let me see it.

Mr. HOUDINI. I own a church in Worcester. They lie; they say our investigators stole them. That is what they say, "falsify" or "misrepresent," that "I stretch the truth," or "they pilfered this when they were not looking."

Mr. REID. How can you object to strong words?

Mr. HOUDINI. I don't object to it. You can stop people telling fortunes, of course.

Mr. REID. What is that church?

Mr. HOUDINI. A New Jersey church; six times ordained.

Mr. REID. Do you get more money if you are six times ordained?

Mr. HOUDINI. No. But I did that to show that was a fraud, and they said, "Here are the original letters; here is where the man took the receipt."

Mr. REID. Are these all yours?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes, sir; I collected them.

Mr. REID. You had your men admitted to become ministers?

Mr. HOUDINI. Ladies; I don't use males, or rarely do. These are all ordinations, and these are what they say are all fake writings, but I have the originals and these are photostat copies. This is the sucker list.

Mr. REID. What do you mean by "sucker list"?

Mr. HOUDINI. People who are duped. She has 40,000 names of people whose fortunes she has told and I managed to get 4,500. I had her arrested in New York and the only way we could get her was on account of this law that a minister only attends to the death and blessing and consoling.

Mr. REID. Did you ever convict anybody?

Mr. HOUDINI. Oh, yes; Mrs. Cecil Cook was arrested and fined \$100, and the editor of this magazine merely helps send his people to be robbed by these fraudulent mediums.

Mr. REID. This is quite a business?

Mr. HOUDINI. No one knows the millions in this. I could guarantee to come to Washington and get \$200,000 or \$300,000, and yet you can not touch me.

Mr. GILBERT. By this you would deprive all the State fairs in the United States of one of their main attractions for obtaining funds. At the Kentucky State fair last year I saw boys and girls just as a nice joke and fun, going in and having their fortunes told. Why don't you limit your men to the serious things and not cover fortune telling?

Mr. HOUDINI. Is it not true of the different sheriffs that these fortune tellers come in and fix it?

Mr. GILBERT. It is not true.

Mr. HOUDINI. With every circus I was with I found they "fixed" the town.

Mr. REID. You don't mean bribed public officials?

Mr. HOUDINI. No; certainly not. But if you think blackmail legalized is all right, it is up to you.

Mr. GILBERT. No, I don't think blackmail is all right.

Mr. REID. Mr. Gilbert says innocent fun should not be stopped.

Mr. GILBERT. You have a bill that not only stops that, but stops all innocent fun.

Mr. HOUDINI. I disagree with you. One of these mediums will say to a woman, "You have been intimate with some man," and then proceed to blackmail her.

Mr. REID. New York is a bad city anyhow.

Mr. HOUDINI. I am talking about Washington.

Mr. REID. They don't do that here?

Mr. HOUDINI. They do that right here in this town.

Mr. REID. Where? Have you got a list?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes. I advertised and I told them to come and make a test for \$10,000.

Mr. GILBERT. Is the gentleman aware that all that is covered by law, and that this would extend it into the trivial field?

Mr. HOUDINI. I differ with you. It would stop people with titles being common robbers.

Mr. BLOOM. Aren't you licensing them now at \$25 and thus giving to the licensee that which this bill is trying to prevent?

Mr. McLEOD. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. REID. I move that he have 10 minutes more. I took up the most of his time.

Mr. HOUDINI. Here is a big case in Chicago, where they set a woman crazy. The medium was a fortune teller and they got \$5,000 from the woman, and the judge sent me that, as have different judges of the various States. Do you know the judge?

Mr. REID. I know him well—Judge Wright.

Mr. HAMMER. I didn't understand what your occupation is.

Mr. HOUDINI. I am a syndicate writer; I am an author, and I am a mystifier, which means I am an illusionist.

Mr. HAMMER. You don't claim to be able to do anything by divine power?

Mr. HOUDINI. No, sir; I am human. But mediums are trying to say I am psychic. That is not true.

Mr. HAMMER. Have you any religious views?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes, sir; I am the son of a rabbi. For hundreds of years my forbears were rabbi.

Mr. HAMMER. Where were you born?

Mr. HOUDINI. I was born in Wisconsin in 1874.

Mr. BLOOM. Everything you do is just as a magician?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes, sir; I call it "mystification." But I do tricks nobody can explain.

Mr. HAMMER. You do not claim divine power?

Mr. HOUDINI. No, sir.

Mr. HAMMER. But these mediums do?

Mr. McLEOD (interposing). You claim you have psychic power?

Mr. HOUDINI. They say I have. No one has; we are all born alike.

Mr. HAMMER. These people claim they have divine power. Don't you think it is very difficult to do anything along the line of stopping them? I am talking to you. You have a religion; and I ask you whether, under our form of government, if we ought not to go very slow before we enact legislation along this line? I want some sort of a bill; this New York law or something. I am in favor of amending and making stronger the law to prevent these things you have exposed, in doing which you have performed a great service, although you are rather severe in your strictures of those who disagree with you.

Mr. HOUDINI. If you had seen people in insane asylums, you would agree with me. I have a list here of about 40 names.

Mr. HAMMER. I don't think soothsayers and gamblers ought to be allowed in county fairs where children go. We ought to have clean county fairs.

Mr. BLOOM. May I read something in reply to Mr. Hammer's question, from the New York decisions?

Where a palmist or astrologist merely gives general advice as to the future, no fortune telling is involved; but where she prophesies as to future events she brings herself within the language of the statute. (*People v. Malcom*. 1915, 90 misc. 517, 154, N. Y.)

Mr. HOUDINI. Astrology does not come under the head of fortune telling.

Mr. HAMMER. One of them here says she prophesied Harding's nomination. I also did that six months before he was nominated, and I am not even an astute politician.

Mr. BLOOM. Mr. Houdini, tell us about Washington.

Mr. HOUDINI. Washington is the only place where you can buy a license for \$25 with which to blackmail and rob the public. You are protecting those fortune tellers who under different guises and titles pretend to see things in the future. They have not got one genuine medium in Washington. If they had, they would have gone after me. They say they can.

Mr. HAMMER. Couldn't you amend the license law in such a way as to accomplish the purpose you desire? We don't allow fortune telling in my State for reward or compensation, and when the county fairs put on these stunts they do so by sufferance. But they move the fair out of my town in order to get what they call "midway," where thieves and robbers with their machines that are all manipulated by electricity to stop wherever they want them to stop ply their trade.

Mr. HOUDINI. There ought to be a law to stop licensing fraud.

Mr. McLEOD. Here is a witness who wants to put something in the record.

**STATEMENT OF MRS. JANE B. COATES, 1630 IRVING STREET NW.,
WASHINGTON, D. C.**

Mrs. COATES. My name is Jane B. Coates. I am also the head of the American Order of the White Cross Societas. I just want to make this little statement, which I think covers part of Congress's connection with the spiritualist.

In a recent interview with Mr. Houdini regarding his movement to have Congress enact laws against fraudulent fortune tellers, he very positively told me that the movement would in no manner attack spiritualism as a religion, or the exponents of spiritualism as a religion.

I see in this bill of Congressman Bloom's no mention of the mediums who give spiritual advice, and I would like to ask if I am correct in this, and to have the chairman state the exact privileges of the mediums connected with spiritualism as a religion.

Prophecy, spiritual guidance, and advice are the very foundation of our religion, and to deny a spiritual minister the right to advise his followers is to curtail their privileges as ministers of their religion.

I have understood this bill to be merely an intention to eliminate fraud and to eliminate those charlatans who pose as fortune tellers before the public. It is a very delicate question with which we deal, gentlemen, and I am sure this committee does not intend to infringe on the constitutional rights of a citizen of the United States of America to practice their religion according to its personal laws.

I therefore, with this confidence in the gentlemen of this committee, ask to have it enacted into this law the right of spiritualists

to give interviews to members of their congregations or to those who come to them in trouble and sorrow needing advice. Also to receive remuneration for their time so employed. As a rule spiritual ministers give their services free of charge to their churches or for so little that they can not live on their salaries. They do not ask money for marriage or burial services, nor for prayers for the dead. The Government has not heretofore taken upon itself to decide a minister's earnings, and why now?

Mr. BLOOM. May I ask the lady a question? Will the lady be seated?

Mrs. COATES. I would just as soon stand, because I have been sitting all morning.

Mr. BLOOM. I said at the outset there is no intention in this bill to attack any religion. Far be it. I just read something from the New York State laws which practically answers your question.

Mrs. COATES. Mr. Bloom, may I ask this question: There was a law enacted here not long ago in the District of Columbia connected with the Volstead Act. In that law we were permitted to make wine in the District of Columbia as long as it did not ferment, and I want to know in regard to this bill when you say spiritualism can not go on, when you do not deny ministers—

Mr. BLOOM. As long as you confine yourself to giving advice according to the New York State law and according to what is said here, personally I have no objection. But let me ask you something: As Mr. Houdini suggested, how are these people ordained ministers of the spiritualism religion? Can't anyone become a minister?

Mrs. COATES. Not in my church.

Mr. BLOOM. But, in the others?

Mrs. COATES. In the National Spiritualist Church or alliance they can not become ministers except according to the rules of the church.

Mr. BLOOM. You are not denying the fact that in some churches who hold themselves out as belonging to the spiritualistic religion that they sell minister's rights and ordain rights on the spur of the moment?

Mrs. COATES. There are a great many bogus organizations in every line of work.

Mr. BLOOM. That is just what we are after, the bogus ones.

Mrs. COATES. Don't you think the police departments can attend to the bogus ones in any State and district?

Mr. BLOOM. Far be it from me to interfere with anyone's personal rights. But knowing, as I do, what exists and what has existed in New York City and what is existing in Washington, we are after the bogus ones. That was the only reason for introducing this bill. But let me ask you something about the Spiritualism religion.

Mrs. COATES. Who would be able to tell who was bogus or real?

Mr. BLOOM. We can tell who is a bogus minister of any other denomination, can we not?

Mrs. COATES. No; we have heard of ministers of other denominations running away with the wives of members of their congregations.

Mr. BLOOM. Madam, just listen. I move that that be stricken out of the record.

Mr. REID. That is a fair answer.

Mr. BLOOM. All right. Let it stand. Let me tell you something. I have asked you a question about how are we going to tell which is the bogus?

Mrs. COATES. I don't consider any man in Congress, unless he is spiritualistic or mystic is able to tell.

Mr. BLOOM. What is a mystic?

Mrs. COATES. A mystic is a person who has evolved certain senses within themselves which brings them knowledge from a world beyond.

Mr. McLEOD. Is Mr. Houdini a mystic?

Mrs. COATES. I think Mr. Houdini is one of the greatest mystics the world possesses to-day.

Mr. BLOOM. But he says he is not.

Mrs. COATES. Mr. Houdini denies everyone's statement that is not on his side of the case.

Mr. BLOOM. But you know what you are claiming is that you have supernatural powers; is not that right?

Mrs. COATES. I do not claim any supernatural powers; but I do claim supernormal senses. I believe we are evolving certain senses within ourselves.

Mr. BLOOM. Are you married, madame?

Mrs. COATES. Am I married? I am a widow, Mr. Bloom.

Mr. BLOOM. I would like to find out one thing: What do the spiritualist ministers teach in regard to children? What kind of religion do they bring their children up in? What religion do they teach them?

Mrs. COATES. Would it be privileged to read a text, Mr. Chairman?

Mr. HOUDINI. You do not know the tricks.

Mr. HAMMER. I do not want to interfere with Mr. Houdini——

Mrs. MARCIA. Mr. Houdini has asked what I think——

Mr. HAMMER. We will give you an opportunity later.

Mr. HOUDINI. May I answer one question?

Mr. GILBERT. I raise the point of order that it is now after 12 o'clock.

Mr. BLOOM. I hope the gentleman will withhold that point of order. Mr. Houdini has come down here to try to do something for the District of Columbia and for the people of the District of Columbia. I am not individually concerned, but it is these people who are being robbed in the District of Columbia, and I think Mr. Houdini ought to be permitted to ask one question and to be heard a few moments. He yielded to the lady.

Mr. GILBERT. I insist on the point of order.

Mr. McLEOD. Unless the point of order is withdrawn, the committee will stand adjourned.

Mr. HAMMER. Let him ask one question.

Mr. GILBERT. I would like to have a ruling on the point of order.

Mr. McLEOD. Unless the point of order is withdrawn, the committee stands adjourned.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE COMMITTEE
ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,

Tuesday, May 18, 1926.

The subcommittee met, 10.45 a. m., pursuant to call, in the caucus room, House Office Building, Hon. Clarence D. McLeod (chairman) presiding.

Mr. McLEOD. The committee will come to order. The bill before the committee this morning is H. R. 8989, to amend chapter 5 of the Code of the District Law, as amended June 7, 1924, relating to offense against public policy. Mr. Houdini, you may call your first witness.

STATEMENT OF REMIGIUS WEISS, PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Mr. McLEOD. You may state your business.

Mr. WEISS. I am a writer and lecturer.

Mr. McLEOD. And where is your home?

Mr. WEISS. 954 North Fifth Street, Philadelphia.

Mr. McLEOD. You may proceed with your statement.

Mr. WEISS. Mr. Chairman, honorable Senators, and friends, in the opening issue I will attempt in the shortest time possible to relate the results of half a century's efforts, experiments, research, in social philosophy, sociology, social psychology, in relation to psychical epidemics and especially in relation to the modern psychical epidemics, the contagious nervous diseases, by-products of so-called spiritism or spiritualism. I will attempt to give you the results of some of my sad experiences in witnessing the victims of these psychical epidemics, psychical pestilences, in the insane asylums, at the graves of victims, if you will permit me to bring out the facts that I have collected and witnessed.

The reason I am here is because I consider it my duty, having gone through the experiments and experiences of others, and as there is no law enacted which will help us to eliminate this psychical pestilence, this contagious mental degeneracy. As we have laws relating to physical pestilences, such as cholera, yellow fever, and smallpox, why should we not have a law to regulate psychical pestilences, psychical epidemics, such as spiritism and occultism.

To make it short, through 50 years of investigation and research I have not found one honest clairvoyant, not one honest spiritualistic medium, except those who do honestly believe in it, and they are victims of mental degeneracy. Most of the mediums are moral degenerates, that I have investigated; do not believe in spiritualism at all. Neither do they believe that the other professional mediums believe in this so-called scientific philosophic harmonious religion. But their victims who do believe in it, I have great pity for.

Among the prominent mediums that I have come in contact with is Dr. Henry Slade, at that time considered the most powerful medium alive. He was considered to have a control or supernatural sense of the cosmic that enabled him to do most wonderful things by which he bamboozled and humbugged prominent scientists, which is an easy thing to do.

Mr. McLEOD. Tell the committee how that is an easy thing.

Mr. WEISS. Scientists and philosophers that I am acquainted with, and I know a great many of them, I find them to be gentlemen, and they would not touch a medium when she comes out dressed as a man, or a male medium dressed up as a woman.

Mr. McLEOD. You say it is easy to deceive these scientists?

Mr. WEISS. Yes. They are gentlemen, sir. They have built up a sort of theory, and they treasure it like the gardener with his flowers. When they come to these mediumistic seances, then their theory is in their minds, and they think if these things can be done in that way there is some psychic force or something in the universe which they can not explain. With a man like Mr. Houdini, a practical man who has ordinary common sense and science at his disposition, they can not fool him. He is a scientist and a philosopher. Please, do I make myself clear on that point?

Now, for instance, Slade, when I exposed him after he had bamboozled and humbugged not only crowned heads, emperors, and kings, who are easy to bamboozle and humbug, but prominent scientists, he made a confession. There was a great book written about Henry Slade by Professor Zöllner, the astro-physicist, something like Sir Oliver Lodge, and a number of others. I am not prepared with any lecture to give you the names. There will be others who will speak, I suppose. I exposed him and found in every one of his tricks that he had bamboozled Professor Zöllner and others. He turned pale, and I told him there was one alternative, "Either sign this confession or you go behind the bars; I will have you put in prison." He begged me to find something that would pull him out of that. Then he signed the confession.

Mr. McLEOD. Are you a magician?

Mr. WEISS. No, sir; I am not a magician.

Mr. McLEOD. You said you disclosed all these things.

Mr. WEISS. I am not a magician.

Mr. McLEOD. How did you disclose them? How did you discover them?

Mr. WEISS. How did I discover them?

Mr. McLEOD. Yes.

Mr. RATHBONE. Have you got that confession with you?

Mr. WEISS. No, sir. I have not a copy of it here. It is printed in Houdini's book. He can read it to you.

These people have their secret agents all around at the hotels and other places. They even have the servants to open your safe and read the innermost secrets of your correspondence. I was after Slade for years before he consented to give a seance in my residence.

So Slade was behind me for years. He made me beg to get to a seance. I paid him \$25, and I invited Hudson Tuttle and Doctor Henry Tiedemann, two prominent spiritists and occultists. Hudson Tuttle was in Philadelphia at that time. I had persons watching outside of the room looking through small holes through the lower panels of the doors, so we could see every movement of Slade's legs and hands under the table. So, for instance: A book extended over the edge of the table. "Dr." Slade slyly gave it a kick with his left foot from under the table. The book turned over, like a flap-door. There is nothing remarkable in this trick. Still, up to this time, spiritists say "Dr. Slade floated a book in the air."

Then after the seance I asked every one of them to write down exactly what they had seen, without consulting the others. I exposed him in the "Girard House." In the hotel when I wanted him to sign this confession, he signed it. He was considered to be one of "the most powerful mediums" of the present time. The confession stated that due to specific circumstances he became a spiritualist about 20 years ago; that he confessed that all of his so-called wonderful manifestations were caused by trickery. He also stated that his criminal practices had caused untold sorrow and trouble and insanity to some of his victims. One of his pupils is in this town. His name is Keeler. I am very sorry we have a law that allows these degenerates to follow their criminal practices. This morning I saw the law which is in existence, which I think is a dangerous law, and gives them a license. They have their secret means of communication, not only the mediums of this country but throughout all countries; they communicate with each other and get the secrets of the people they want to make their victims.

Mr. McLEOD. Who are you including in spiritualism? Are you including clairvoyants?

Mr. WEISS. Yes, sir. Personally I have patience with some of these so-called clairvoyants, because they have been bamboozled and have been deceived. They really believe that some of these so-called clairvoyants really do these things. I have tried ever so many of them. I have hypnotized several hundred people and put them in a trance condition. This so-called art of hypnotism is absolutely no secret and is nothing extraordinary.

Mr. McLEOD. Can you hypnotize?

Mr. WEISS. I have hypnotized several hundred persons and put them in a deep trance condition, sometimes dozens at once. You can; almost everybody can. I can not hypnotize everyone; but every human being can be hypnotized, not by me, but perhaps by you. It is in the person. It is not in the hypnotist. It is no secret power or hidden power in the hypnotist. I have no secret power within me to do it. I could not hypnotize a child and I could not hypnotize an idiot. That is because there is no way of suggesting to them. You can hypnotize a highly intellectual person who is able to concentrate his or her mind much better than a weak-minded person.

I venture to say that it is most necessary to have a law to eliminate the spiritualistic mediums, the clairvoyants, if I may call it so, because it is epidemic, it is contagious. There are whole families of highly intellectual persons who have been attacked. In my study of this movement I find whole villages where almost every person is infected with this fever, this contagious epidemic.

Mr. RATHBONE. Have you read this bill, H. R. 8989, that is under consideration by this committee?

Mr. WEISS. No, sir; I have not had the time to do so. I just came in on a train this morning.

Mr. RATHBONE. You would not be in favor of any law which would prevent people from believing as they saw fit to believe, would you?

Mr. WEISS. I have nothing against their religion.

Mr. RATHBONE. You would not be in favor of any law that would restrict freedom of thought or expression?

Mr. WEISS. No, sir. I am not against freedom of the press or freedom of speech.

Mr. McLEOD. Is spiritualism a creed or religion?

Mr. WEISS. The spiritualists claim that their philosophy is a new, scientific, philosophic, harmonious religion. It is, in fact, from far back in the dark times before civilization—in the caveman's time. It is just the same as when we have a growing appendix. It may have been of some use to an animal being. When it becomes diseased it is of no use to a human being. What do we do? We cut it out. So please let us cut out this so-called religion, this psychical epidemic; let us cut it out, this commercialized superstition, this morbid psychical appendix.

Mr. McLEOD. Do you believe that you understand the religion and creed of spiritualism?

Mr. WEISS. Yes, sir. I have studied it more than 50 years. I had at one time perhaps the largest library relating to occultism, including spiritism, in this country.

Mr. RATHBONE. Will you name two or three of the leading and most authoritative books on the subject that are recognized by spiritualists, that contain their doctrines?

Mr. WEISS. Sargent (the brother of the great engraver), recognized as an "apostle of science." Then there was Hudson Tuttle. Also there was Andrew Jackson Davis; of Davis's writings I had 28 volumes in my library.

Mr. McLEOD. You mentioned Sir Oliver Lodge a while ago.

Mr. WEISS. Yes, sir.

Mr. McLEOD. You do not claim he is a spiritualist, do you?

Mr. WEISS. He is an advocate of spiritualism, and so is Conan Doyle.

Mr. McLEOD. You claim they believe the doctrine of spiritualism, and they are attempting to make a case for spiritualism. You do not claim that, do you?

Mr. WEISS. They do. They may be conscious or unconscious of doing a great wrong to humanity. Houdini has a collection of over 200 letters from authors, writers, and lecturers, and spiritualistic mediums during the last half century, and they confess themselves and say, "We hate this trickery in the dark seance, but we must have it. Otherwise the people will not be curious to come to our meetings and to come to our church, and when they do come to our meetings and church they become members and our cause is benefited." I do not say that all the spiritualists are humbugs. The professional mediums are humbugs and frauds.

Mr. McLEOD. What you claim is that you haven't any objection to spiritualism in general, but to the abuse of it?

Mr. WEISS. To the abuse of it.

Mr. RATHBONE. The same as there are abuses in the legal profession and the medical profession?

Mr. WEISS. Just so. That is correct. Conan Doyle and Sir Oliver Lodge are just as much opposed to the abuses of spiritualism as I am.

Mr. McLEOD. Is Conan Doyle a spiritualist?

Mr. WEISS. He is a decided spiritualist.

Mr. McLEOD. Is he a medium?

Mr. WEISS. No, sir. He is a believer. He is deluded. He is very enthusiastic over it.

Mr. McLEOD. Is it a fact that this matter of spiritualism can be worked out in some instances?

Mr. WEISS. No. There is no such thing as genuine spiritualistic manifestations, no such a thing as clairvoyancy, thought transference, or whatever it may be termed.

Mr. McLEOD. You said a moment ago that you knew a great deal about spiritualism. Do you know what their principles are, without referring to any memorandum?

Mr. HOUDINI. May I ask that Mrs. Jane Coates be not permitted to interfere with the witness. It is just showmanship on her part. May I ask that she not be permitted to do that? She is interjecting herself into these hearings at certain points, and I ask that she refrain from doing so.

Mr. WEISS. I can not demonstrate the principles, but I say it is impossible to demonstrate any religion. They claim to demonstrate their religion by spiritual communication.

Mr. BLOOM. You do not object, do you, to any person who is a spiritualist, or anything else, following that belief that they think is right?

Mr. WEISS. I am glad if they have some ideal to follow, if it is consoling, if it makes them happy. We have no objection to their religious philosophy.

Mr. BLOOM. They might be just as near right as you are or I am or anyone else.

Mr. WEISS. Yes, sir.

Mr. BLOOM. So that is out of the picture?

Mr. WEISS. That is out of the picture, out of the question.

Mr. BLOOM. This bill applies to persons pretending to tell fortunes, etc.?

Mr. WEISS. Yes, sir.

Mr. BLOOM. What have you to say about that?

Mr. WEISS. There is no such thing that any person can tell fortunes unless he knows your personality and has made a study of your business, your activities. There is no such thing as communicating with spirits.

Mr. McLEOD. You have no way of proving what you say, have you?

Mr. WEISS. I can not prove it or disprove as a "religion," but my investigations of half a century have shown conclusively that they practice deception and fraud, and that "mediums" and spiritomaniacs and medio-maniacs are a menace to any community.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENT OF HARRY HOUDINI

Mr. HOUDINI. Mr. Chairman, Senators, ladies, and gentlemen, regarding this bill, 8989, this is the only place in the United States of America where a crook or a clairvoyant or a fraudulent medium is licensed for \$25, and under that license they can blackmail and do any crime in the calendar, when no physical contact takes place, and get away with it. I have here a full list of the practicing clairvoyants and mediums. Last Saturday Governor Al Smith vetoed

a bill that the spiritualists tried to put through in New York State, and they will eventually try to put it through in the District of Columbia.

Mr. HAMMER. What bill was that?

Mr. HOUDINI. It would permit mediums to tell fortunes, providing they belong to the Spiritualist Church.

Mr. HAMMER. Who introduced it?

Mr. HOUDINI. The National Spiritual Association, many of whom are present here, and they have headquarters in Washington.

Mr. BLOOM. That was in the Legislature of New York?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes. The idea is not to be interfered with in telling fortunes, providing some one who is dead comes back to them. Millions of dollars are stolen by clairvoyants and mediums in America every year, and I can prove it. All I want is to be asked to furnish proof. Give me the medium, and I will prove that they are either psychosis or criminal.

Mr. McLEOD. I do not want to interfere with your statement, but you have made quite an extensive investigation, as has this gentleman. Why would it not be possible, if that is such an outrageous fake and fraud, that it would be discovered by such men as Conan Doyle, who is an outstanding authority?

Mr. HOUDINI. Conan Doyle is not an outstanding authority.

Mr. McLEOD. He is accepted as one of the best.

Mr. HOUDINI. No; he is not accepted as one of the best. He is one of the greatest dupes, outside of Sir Oliver Lodge. Conan Doyle stated that I possess mediumistic powers, which I deny.

Mr. McLEOD. How can you prove it?

Mr. HOUDINI. I admit that I do not possess mediumistic powers. They claim in a London psychic college I dematerialize my body, and that I ooze through and come out again and put myself together. That is Hewitt McKenzie.

Mr. McLEOD. How do you do it?

Mr. HOUDINI. I do it like anybody else would do it. There is nothing secret about it. We are all humans. Nobody is supernatural. We are all born alike.

Mr. BLOOM. In your travels throughout the country, have you ever heard of any city in the United States that has a law similar to the law of the District of Columbia with reference to fortune-telling?

Mr. HOUDINI. Not where they license them and permit them to rob the public.

Mr. RATHBONE. You say there is no State that has no law against it. Have you made an examination of the statutes of all of the States of the Union?

Mr. HOUDINI. No, sir.

Mr. RATHBONE. Have you had any legal advice on which you base that statement?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes, sir.

Mr. BLOOM. Mr. Rathbone, I have made a study of it. I have letters from all of the large cities in the United States, covering practically every State in the Union. The great majority of them positively prohibit fortune telling in any form. Some of the cities, such as Pensacola, Fla., charge a prohibitive price, say, \$50 a week.

Other cities charge more. But for the record I will put in all the large cities in the United States that do not allow fortune telling in any form whatever. I have letters here from the district attorneys or from the clerks or from the mayors of the different cities stating how they regulate fortune telling in the different cities.

(The summary referred to is as follows:)

In the following-named cities fortune telling is prohibited by law: Birmingham, Ala.; Boise, Idaho; Baltimore, Md.; Boston, Mass.; Chicago, Ill.; Cincinnati, Ohio; Charleston, S. C.; Cleveland, Ohio; Detroit, Mich.; Des Moines, Iowa; Hartford, Conn.; Kansas City, Mo.; Louisville, Ky.; Montpelier, Vt.; New York (county of); New Orleans, La.; Omaha, Nebr.; Pittsburgh, Pa.; Providence, R. I.; Phoenix, Ariz.; Portland, Oreg.; Peoria, Ill.; San Francisco, Calif.; Seattle, Wash.; Salt Lake City, Utah.; St. Louis, Mo.; Trenton, N. J.

The cities listed below impose a license fee as indicated: Helena, Mont., \$5 per day; Memphis, Tenn., \$1,500 per year; Madison, Wis., \$5 per day; Pensacola, Fla., \$50 per week; Raleigh, N. C., \$1,000 per year; Richmond, Va., \$500 per quarter; Topeka, Kans., \$10 per day, \$50 per week, \$150 per month.

Mr. HAMMER. The law in the District does not permit it.

Mr. BLOOM. The statute in the District of Columbia gives them the right to do that very thing that no other city allows.

Mr. HAMMER. Is it fraud?

Mr. BLOOM. I am not saying it is fraud. I leave that to the idea and thought and judgment of the gentleman, Mr. Hammer, whether it is fraud or not. But the District of Columbia has the broadest license with reference to fortune telling than any other city in the United States.

Mr. HAMMER. But that does not license them to commit fraud.

Mr. BLOOM. It licenses them to tell fortunes.

Mr. HAMMER. Oh, yes; by coffee grounds and such as that.

Mr. McLEOD. Mr. Houdini, you say you are opposed to all forms of fortune telling. I take it that astrology and palmistry would come within that classification.

Mr. HOUDINI. I am talking about the bill.

Mr. McLEOD. Is that correct?

Mr. HOUDINI. They can not tell fortunes. If you want to know whether I believe in it or not, no; I do not think anyone can foretell.

Mr. McLEOD. Is it a fact that palmistry is a science?

Mr. HOUDINI. No; it is not.

Mr. McLEOD. What do you call it?

Mr. HOUDINI. It is a fraud. How can you tell anything from the lines of the hand? You can tell whether a man is a bricklayer or a bank clerk.

Mr. McLEOD. And that is as far as you can go?

Mr. HOUDINI. That is as far as anybody can go unless they deduce from reading you.

Mr. McLEOD. How about astrology?

Mr. HOUDINI. I do not believe in astrology. They can not tell from a chunk of mud millions of miles away what is going to happen to me.

Mr. McLEOD. Is it a fact that there has never been any actual demonstration or actual proof? I understand astrology can bring out facts that have been proven to be true.

Mr. HOUDINI. Where they make so many guesses, sometimes they make a good guess. I predicted the election of the mayor of Worcester. I hit lots of things, just like anybody else. If you guess often enough, you are bound to guess something right.

Mr. BLOOM. What do you predict about farm legislation? I would like to get your opinion on that. It might put a little thought into the minds of some of these farmers from Forty-second and Broadway.

Mr. HOUDINI. It is strange that mediums and clairvoyants and astrologists have to charge from \$2 to \$10 to tell you what is going to happen, when they could make a million dollars every week in Wall Street. They could tell who is going to be elected all the time.

Mr. RATHBONE. Can you not get somebody to tell us about the result of the Pennsylvania primary to-day?

Mr. HOUDINI. I would like to do it myself.

This is the bill that was vetoed in New York. This is the bill that will eventually be put through under the guise of religion. Here is the bill they will try to pass in every State, and I believe if you give them a chance they will put it over.

Mr. RATHBONE. I would like to hear that. What bill is that?

Mr. HOUDINI. That is a bill providing for fortune telling. May I read it?

[State of New York. No. 655. Int. 616. In Senate, February 15, 1926]

AN ACT To amend the code of criminal procedure in relation to disorderly persons

The people of the State of New York, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Subdivision 3 of section 899 of the code of criminal procedure is hereby amended to read as follows:

3. Persons pretending to tell fortunes, or where lost or stolen goods may be found; *but the words "pretending to tell fortunes," as used in this subdivision, shall not be construed to mean or include any word or words used by any person while performing the rite or rites or exercising the privileges or performing the duties of any branch of the ministry of any religious order or church incorporated pursuant to the religious corporations law of the State of New York.*

SEC. 2. This act shall take effect September 1, 1926.

EXPLANATION.—Matter in italics is new; matter in brackets ([]) is old law to be omitted.

Mr. RATHBONE. Do you claim it is the law now?

Mr. HOUDINI. It is not the law now. Governor Smith vetoed it in New York.

Mr. BLOOM. In Chicago have they a license for fortune telling?

Mr. HOUDINI. No; but if you belong to the Spiritualist Church you can tell fortunes.

Mr. BLOOM. Is not that the law practically all over the country, that if you belong to the Spiritualist Church you can tell fortunes? In Chicago is there a law allowing people to take out a license to tell fortunes?

Mr. HOUDINI. No; no license.

Mr. McLEOD. How long is that bill?

Mr. HOUDINI. I don't have to read it. It provides that the act shall not be construed to interfere with spiritualistic mediums or officers of any public ministry or accredited representatives of any religion. There is no license whatsoever, but if you belong to the spiritualists church and say the spirit of Abraham Lincoln is present, and that he tells me such and such is the case, they can do it, but no license is granted.

Mr. RATHBONE. You do not mean to be taken literally, do you, in saying that no religion should have the right to tell what a person's future is going to be? Is not that a large part of religion?

Mr. HOUDINI. Not who your wife is going to be, or how an investment in real estate is going to turn out. It does not charge a dollar or two dollars or five dollars for telling you when to sell your house.

Mr. RATHBONE. Mr. Houdini, is there not a common sense way of looking at this? I want to get your view about it. What you want to avoid is having people defrauded of considerable sums of money. You would not object to a person paying 25 or 50 cents to have his or her fortune told, even if they did not believe in it, as a little form of entertainment, or something, would you? You would not want to prevent the boy or girl at the country fair having somebody tell their fortune, or some trifle like that, to get a little fun out of it, and maybe go away laughing and say they do not believe in it? What you want to reach is the defrauding of people of considerable sums of money so that real injustice is done?

Mr. HOUDINI. May I answer your question by asking one?

Mr. RATHBONE. Yes; go ahead.

Mr. HOUDINI. Do you believe it would be all right to give a boy or girl just a tiny bit of dope or opium, just enough to make them happy? If you say yes, I will say yes.

Mr. RATHBONE. I do not see any analogy between the two.

Mr. HOUDINI. Absolutely. You have not visited the insane asylums like I have. I got these in Washington. These are lucky charms. I would like to put these in evidence.

They start in generally at \$50. They paid for these from \$5 downwards. They asked one investigator \$500, but eventually took \$5. I say 100 per cent of the fortune-telling, under any circumstances, is fraudulent. A fraudulent medium is in the dirtiest profession in the world.

Mr. McLEOD. We can not get around that, if we attempt it. We have the Spiritualist Churches. What about the Christian Science Churches?

Mr. HOUDINI. They don't take their money for lucky charms.

Mr. McLEOD. They make collections.

Mr. HOUDINI. That is different.

Mr. RATHBONE. You would recognize this statement to be true, would you not: That if there is one fundamental principle of our country and of our Constitution, it is to guarantee to every one freedom of thought and religious worship.

Mr. HOUDINI. May I read what Governor Al Smith said about it? When he vetoed the spiritualist bill he said:

The code of criminal procedure to-day declares that persons pretending to tell fortunes of where lost or stolen goods may be found are disorderly persons. This bill seeks to make them orderly persons provided they are performing the rite or rites, or exercising the privileges, or performing the duties of any

branch of the ministry of any religious order. In operation it would arbitrarily select a relatively small number of persons and give them immunity from prosecution. Regarding it in that light, I am unable to resist the conclusion that it violates the Constitution of the United States.

That is what Governor Al Smith said when he vetoed the bill.

Mr. BLOOM. For the benefit of the gentleman from Illinois, I want to read to him the law pertaining to fortune-telling in Chicago:

FRAUDS AND FRAUDULENT REPRESENTATIONS; FORTUNE TELLING

Advertising prohibited—Penalty.—It shall be unlawful for any person or persons to advertise by display sign, circular, handbill, or in any newspaper, periodical, magazine, or other publication or publications, or by any other means, to tell fortunes or reveal the future, or to find or restore lost or stolen property, to locate oil wells, gold or silver, or other ore or metal or natural product; to restore lost love, friendship, or affection; to reunite or procure lovers, husbands, wives, lost relatives or friends, or to give advice in business affairs, or advice of any kind or nature to others for or without pay, by means of occult or psychic power, faculties or forces, clairvoyance, psychology, psychometry, spirits, mediumship, seership, prophecy, astrology, palmistry, necromancy, or like crafty science, cards, talismans, charms, potions, magnetism or magnetized articles or substances, oriental mysteries, or magic of any kind or nature; and any person convicted thereof shall be punished by a fine of not less than \$25 nor more than \$100 for each offense.

Spirit mediumship, etc., forbidden—Penalty.—Any person or persons who shall obtain money or property from another by fraudulent devices and practices in the name of, or by means of spirit mediumship, palmistry, card reading, astrology, seership, or like crafty science, or fortune telling of any kind, shall be punished by a fine of not less than \$25 nor more than \$100 for each offense.

Fraud at meetings, etc.—Penalty.—Any person or persons who shall hold or give any public or private meeting, gathering, circle, or seance of any kind in the name of spiritualism, or of any other religious body, society, cult or denomination, and therein practice, or permit to be practiced, fraud or deception of any kind, shall, on conviction thereof, be punished by a fine of not less than \$25 nor more than \$100 for each offense.

Mr. RATHBONE. That is a good law.

Mr. HAMMER. If we have not got such a law here, we ought to have it.

Mr. BLOOM. That is what this bill calls for.

Mr. HAMMER. I do not think so.

Mr. BLOOM. It prohibits fortune telling under the guise of spiritualism. I think that people who believe in spiritualism have just as much right to believe in that as I have to believe in my religion, but I say when any religion is used as a guise to defraud people I believe it should be legislated against.

Mr. RATHBONE. I agree with you.

Mr. HAMMER. Does not this bill include Christian Science?

Mr. HOUDINI. No. It does not mean any religion at all.

Mr. HAMMER. Christian Scientists practice medicine on faith with prayer, and you say there is no such thing.

Mr. HOUDINI. There is such a thing as the emotions having an effect upon the body, but what I am aiming at is telling you for \$10 that you are going to marry a fat woman. That is a very different thing.

Mr. HOUSTON. What harm does it do?

Mr. HOUDINI. Why charge them for it?

Mr. HAMMER. I do not believe in Christian Science.

Mr. HOUDINI. Neither do I.

Mr. HAMMER. But Christian Scientists do believe in healing by faith.

Mr. HOUDINI. But that does not tell your fortune.

Mr. HAMMER. This bill does not include that?

Mr. HOUDINI. No. Here is a photograph of a woman who was 30 years a medium. Mrs. Anne M. Clark Benninghofen, of Anderson, Ind., who is now reformed. I have a number of affidavits I could read to you. I can go as far as any of these people. I can bring back the spirits just as much as they can.

Mr. HAMMER. Does not that include you?

Mr. HOUDINI. I do not tell fortunes.

Mr. HAMMER. You do not believe in that mystic power?

Mr. HOUDINI. No.

Mr. HAMMER. How about sleight of hand?

Mr. HOUDINI. If you tell fortunes by sleight of hand, that would apply to it.

Mr. HAMMER. But this mystic power, as I get it, is really sleight of hand, is it not?

Mr. HOUDINI. They switch your messages.

Mr. HAMMER. That is where your sleight of hand comes in, is it not?

Mr. HOUDINI. No. That is pretending to do something you are not doing, but I do not tell your fortune.

Mr. BLOOM. What percentage of your spirits can come back?

Mr. HOUDINI. What do you mean?

Mr. BLOOM. More than $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent?

Mr. HOUDINI. This woman I refer to, Mrs. Benninghoff, was 30 years an active spiritualist in America. Her mother died and wanted her to confess, and she did. There is her photograph. I will guarantee to give you a message, and you can not detect it.

Mr. BLOOM. Will you give me a message out of that?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes.

Mr. BLOOM. Give me a message from Tom Blanton.

Mr. RATHBONE. Is that necessary? Congressman are often known to blow their own horns.

Mr. HOUDINI. That is their belief. There are different phases, but they are all the same.

Mr. McLEOD. A moment ago you stated that some one said somewhere that somehow you got out of some box, or some part of your body dissolved, or something like that. You say those people could not be convinced to the contrary.

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes.

Mr. McLEOD. They believed it was not real?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes.

Mr. McLEOD. They paid you to do that.

Mr. HOUDINI. No they didn't.

Mr. McLEOD. Did they not pay an admission fee.

Mr. HOUDINI. They saw the rest of the show.

Mr. McLEOD. They paid an admission fee for that. You perform in vaudeville shows, do you not?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes and no.

Mr. McLEOD. Then it is a fact that you were doing practically the same thing, only you called it trickery, and other people call it science or something other than trickery.

Mr. HOUDINI. I did not say it was religion, and I did not charge for telling their fortunes. I entertained them.

Mr. McLEOD. You get paid for allowing that belief to rest in the people.

Mr. HOUDINI. I tell them it is trickery.

Mr. McLEOD. They do not believe it.

Mr. HOUDINI. They do not believe it.

Mr. RATHBONE. The thing to be guarded against is deliberate fraud?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes, sir.

Mr. RATHBONE. That is practically covered, is it not, in general by the law of every State, and the common law, against obtaining money under false pretenses, and such laws as that.

Mr. HOUDINI. Not in the District of Columbia. You license them to be crooked.

Mr. RATHBONE. I have not made an intensive study of the law. Have you looked it up carefully to know whether this subject is or is not covered in whole or in part by the existing laws of the District of Columbia?

Mr. HOUDINI. No, sir; not if you can get a license for \$25. May I show you what we can do under the law here? Last night I caught Mrs. Jane Coates and Mrs. Marcia taking money from me. Mrs. Marcia took \$10 and Mrs. Jane Coates took \$2.

(The committee and audience were thrown into a state of confusion. The chairman was endeavoring to restore order, several members of the committee demanding the regular order, and the witness and some six or eight others were talking at the same time.)

Mr. HOUDINI. Mrs. Marcia took \$10 of my money, and you took \$2.

Mrs. Jane COATES. I brought witnesses to tell what you were saying in this meeting.

Mr. McLEOD. You will have an opportunity to talk in a moment.

Mr. HOUDINI. Yesterday my investigator went around and was robbed by 10 people, and they all accused her of certain things. You accused her of being intimate with a man.

Mrs. COATES. Oh, no.

Mr. HAMMER. I object to that remark. You are too much of a gentleman to make a statement of that kind when the witness can not reply to you.

Mr. HOUDINI. May I answer that? I would not believe a fraudulent medium under oath. In Chicago Lawyer Colburn's son took a check I had as evidence.

Mr. RATHBONE. Mr. John J. Colburn?

Mr. HOUDINI. His son.

Mr. RATHBONE. When did that happen?

Mr. HOUDINI. In Chicago two weeks ago, in front of Judge Holmes. The check was missing. Lawyer Colburn said I had stolen it. It is in the minutes. I told it to the jury. They say all I want is publicity. I don't need any publicity. I am not working the rest of the year. They found the check in Mr. Colburn's son's brief case, and he said to Judge Holmes that he got it in there by mistake. You know Lawyer Colburn. He is a good reputable lawyer.

Mr. RATHBONE. I know John J. Colburn. I do not know that case, but we can not try that case.

Mr. HOUDINI. I am telling you what these mediums will do. And I want to introduce this witness to show what they will do. I want to prove these mediums took money from her yesterday.

Mr. HAMMER. Why do you not go into court?

Mr. HOUDINI. The law does not cover it. I want to show you what you can do under the law. You license these people to steal. They are criminals.

Mr. HAMMER. We do not license them to steal.

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes; you do. I beg your pardon, but they do steal.

Mr. McLEOD. What statement do you want her to make?

Mr. HOUDINI. I want her to tell you her experience with Mrs. Jane Coates, and her experience with Mrs. Marcia. Never mind the other eight. We just want those two important ones.

Mr. BLOOM. Mr. Hammer, in paragraph 32 of the law relating to license taxes in the District of Columbia, I want to read the law for the benefit of the members of the committee, so they may understand that whatever they have done or whatever these people are trying to do, they have a right to do that under the law. You can see that if you will listen to this law.

Mr. HAMMER. I do not need to listen. I know it is against the law in every jurisdiction in America.

Mr. BLOOM. They have the right to do that for profit or gain. That is the broadest law in the entire United States, either licensing or regulating fortune-telling. They can do anything they want to do.

Mr. HAMMER. Not by committing fraud.

Mr. McLEOD. You may proceed with this witness.

STATEMENT OF MISS ROSE MACKENBERG

Mr. HOUDINI. Just go ahead and state what you did yesterday.

Miss MACKENBERG. I phoned Mrs. Coates at 9.30 and asked her to make an appointment. She made an appointment for 4 o'clock. When I got there she was busy. I had to wait about 30 minutes before I saw her.

Mr. McLEOD. That was yesterday?

Miss MACKENBERG. Yesterday afternoon.

Mr. McLEOD. May 17?

Miss MACKENBERG. Yes, sir. When she came in she took me into another room and asked me whether I understood the principles of spiritualism, and went into details about that. She said she saw a blue vapor about me and got the impression of a man who was strangling, and she recognized the condition as that of my husband. This man was also with a couple of children. Did I recognize who they were? She said the children appeared as though they were with my husband and were my children. She also mentioned the name of Lena as my daughter, about 15 years of age, and had progressed very much since she had passed into the spirit. She said, "You are interested in a man at the present time. I do not know whether he is going to marry you, but you have been intimate with him—in fact, quite intimate, almost as good as married." I said I didn't quite understand what she meant, and she said, "Well, of course, I do not believe in such relationships, but it is quite in vogue

at the present time, and the vibration and the spirit condition about me indicates that."

She then said, "You are going on a trip through the East." I asked her if it was Florida, and she said, "No; it looks to me more like Atlantic City." I said, "How do you get that impression?" She said, "The spirits give it to me very strongly." She said I was going to be offered some money very shortly, but the spirits advised me to be careful about taking it. She then handed me a pamphlet and said she conducted meetings and would I care to attend them. That was an independent organization, she said, different from the N. S. A. And would I care to come to the Senate room to-morrow morning and hear the argument she was going to put up in relation to Houdini's bill?

I asked her how much the reading was, and she said \$2. I handed her \$2 and crumpled them up, and she unfolded them and said I was very nervous; that the spirits said if I didn't get over that nervous condition I was in I would die very shortly; that the spirits were very strong about saying that.

Mr. RATHBONE. Did you go to that lady at the instance or request of Mr. Houdini?

Miss MACKENBERG. I went to a number of them. Mrs. Coates was just one of those I visited.

Mr. RATHBONE. You were out to get information for Mr. Houdini?

Miss MACKENBERG. Yes, sir.

Mr. RATHBONE. That is what you wanted to do?

Miss MACKENBERG. Yes, sir.

Mr. RATHBONE. Were you in his employ?

Miss MACKENBERG. Yes, sir.

Mr. RATHBONE. To get evidence for him?

Miss MACKENBERG. Yes, sir.

Mr. HOUDINI. For the committee; so I could bring it here this morning.

Did she tell you you were intimate with a man?

Miss MACKENBERG. Yes.

Mr. HOUDINI. She did?

Miss MACKENBERG. Yes.

Mr. HOUDINI. Tell what you know about Madam Marcia. How much did Mrs. Coates charge you?

Miss MACKENBERG. Two dollars.

Mr. HOUDINI. Go ahead and tell me about Mrs. Marcia.

Miss MACKENBERG. I made an appointment with Mrs. Marcia also, and she gave me an appointment for 11 o'clock in the morning.

Mr. McLEOD. Was that yesterday?

Miss MACKENBERG. Yes, sir. When I called there a colored maid admitted me and asked me to wait, saying Mrs. Marcia was busy. I waited until about 11.30, when two women left, and I was asked to go up stairs. Madam Marcia looked as though she had been crying. She was very much worried about this Houdini bill; that the spirits were bothering her, saying she would have to join the spiritualistic organization to be immune from the bill.

She then went on and talked about the fight that they had in the Senate recently, where she had gotten up and spoken about the bill, and went on to say that about 20 years ago she worked

for a Miss Pepper as medium, but that she had come on to Washington and didn't care to go into that branch of mediumistic work, as it was overcrowded. She said she used to give spirit messages, and always had a crowd when her name was published; in fact, she had as good a house as Houdini did at the Belasco Theater.

Mr. HOUDINI. Whom was she trying to get over the telephone?

Miss MACKENBERG. She called Congressman Bloom's office and left word she had a very important message for Congressman Bloom and was anxious to get him, and would he please call her? She said the two women who just left were from the Senate, and they were doing some very active work trying to hinder this bill from being passed.

Mr. RATHBONE. You sort of gathered from what was said, did you not that this was really a contest between the spiritualists on the one side and Mr. Houdini and his tribe on the other side, one wanting to drive the other out of the field and take it all themselves?

Miss MACKENBERG. I had formed no opinion at all. I merely followed instructions as to what I was to do.

Mr. McLEOD. Proceed.

Mr. HOUDINI. How much did she charge you?

Miss MACKENBERG. She charged me \$10.

Mr. HOUDINI. Did you pay her?

Miss MACKENBERG. Yes. While she was giving me that reading she said that as she sat there she got a very strong vibration of someone who had died of cancer; in fact, she smelled a condition of cancer, and she shuddered a couple of times. Then she said some one by the name of Joseph or George was communicating very strongly with her. She said she sometimes got spirit vibrations very strongly, although she had gotten away from spiritualism quite a bit. She said a number of Senators were coming to her readings; in fact, most of the Senators did consult astrologists.

Mr. BLOOM. No Congressmen; just the Senators?

Miss MACKENBERG. Just the Senators. She said she had been to a materialization seance on Sunday, held at the Unity Spiritualist Church, and that in the cabinet a note was written by one of the spirits and she tried to get it, but when she tried the supposed-to-be spirit withdrew and dropped the note. After the meeting was over she went to the cabinet and picked the note up, and she showed it to me. It was scrawled very badly. The writing was almost illegible. She said, "To think that people believe the spirits would write such junk!"

Mr. HOUDINI. I insist that Mrs. Coates keep away from the witness.

What did she tell you about the White House and seances being there?

Mrs. COATES. I object. You are talking about me. Mr. Chairman, I demand the right to answer this.

Mr. McLEOD. You will have an opportunity to be heard.

Mr. HOUSTON. I suggest that we finish with Madam Marcia first.

Mr. HOUDINI. Go on.

Mrs. COATES. I am ill, and I have something to say.

Miss MACKENBERG. Madam Marcia told me her charge and I asked her if she would not accept less than \$10. She said \$10 or nothing; in fact, \$15 for a written horoscope and \$10 for the other.

She said a number of Senators were coming to her for readings; in fact, almost all the people in the White House believed in spiritualism, and that she was very much chagrined to think I was trying to reduce her fee from what she asked.

While I was at Madam Coates's place she said Houdini was up against a stone wall. She said, "Why try to fight spiritualism, when most of the Senators are interested in the subject? I have a number of Senators who visit me here, and I know for a fact that there have been spiritual seances held at the White House with President Coolidge and his family, which proves that intercommunication with the dead is established."

Then she mentioned the name of Senator Capper, saying his wife had died recently, and that he attended spiritualist seances. She also mentioned Senator Watson, Senator Dill, and Senator Fletcher, whose wife is a medium and has often given seances. She knew Carrington very well, and Slater had been present in Washington last month, and she had sent a question to him and he had answered it, but he did not answer it exactly to the question she had asked. She said she expected some money from the Government shortly.

MR. HOUDINI. How much money?

MISS MACKENBERG. About \$25,000.

MR. HOUDINI. Mrs. Coates said that?

MISS MACKENBERG. Yes, sir.

MR. HOUDINI. She said she expected to get \$25,000 from the Government?

MISS MACKENBERG. Yes, sir.

MR. HOUDINI. I just wanted to establish the fact that she did not know it.

MISS MACKENBERG. Then she went on to say that she had done considerable lobbying in the Senate, and had interviewed about 22, and 16 of them were entirely favorable toward spiritualism, and if Houdini knew that condition he would take different action. She said would I try to come to the meeting this morning; that it would be very interesting, and she was going to put up a big fight.

MR. BLOOM. You obliged her by coming this morning?

MISS MACKENBERG. Yes, sir.

MR. HOUSTON. Did she say anything about the House?

MISS MACKENBERG. Just the Senate.

MR. MCLEOD. Have you anything further?

MISS MACKENBERG. Not at present.

MR. MCLEOD. Are there any questions?

MR. HOUSTON. I would like to ask her if there is any truth in these things. Is there any truth in any of the things she told you, or either one of them?

MISS MACKENBERG. None whatever. I have never been married and never had any children, and contemplated none of the things she was talking about.

May I say one thing more? Madam Marcia said she had been called upon or phoned to be careful.

MR. HOUDINI. After you expose mediums, what do they say?

MISS MACKENBERG. They always say they knew me. Madam Marcia was very frank in speaking to me. She was at no time suspicious of me. She opened up very frankly and told me what was in her mind; how they were going to fight the bill.

Mr. HOUDINI. Were you dressed differently from what you are to-day?

Miss MACKENBERG. Yes, sir.

Mr. HOUDINI. Entirely different?

Miss MACKENBERG. Entirely different.

Mrs. COATES. Why didn't you wear that coat?

Mr. HOUDINI. Do they always ask you that?

Miss MACKENBERG. Yes, sir. They always say they knew me all the time.

Mrs. COATES. I demand the right to defend myself.

Mr. HAMMER. Mr. Chairman, I ask that we proceed in an orderly way. There are six or eight people talking at one time, and it is impossible for us to have any record of these proceedings.

Mrs. COATES. It will not take three minutes for me to tell you what I told her, and it will clear the whole situation.

Mr. HAMMER. You may do that later.

Miss MACKENBERG. May I show the pamphlet that Mrs. Coates handed me?

Mr. HOUDINI. Did she ask you to join?

Miss MACKENBERG. Yes, sir.

Mrs. COATES. I didn't ask her to join anything. May I speak?

Mr. HAMMER. I insist that we can not get a record of this proceeding when so many people are talking at one time.

Mr. McLEOD. Miss Mackenberg, would you care to answer any questions of Mrs. Coates at this time?

Mr. HOUDINI. Certainly.

Mr. RATHBONE. Did you ever do any detective work before?

Miss MACKENBERG. I would hardly call it detective work. I call it investigating work.

Mr. RATHBONE. Is that your regular line?

Mr. HOUDINI. She is one of my investigators.

Mr. BLOOM. How much have you investigated mediums throughout the country?

Miss MACKENBERG. I have investigated over 300.

Mr. HOUDINI. Were you ordained as a minister in spiritualism?

Miss MACKENBERG. Yes, sir.

Mr. HOUDINI. How many times were you ordained?

Miss MACKENBERG. Six times.

Mr. HOUDINI. Here are the ordinations, if you want to see them. She was six times ordained.

Mr. BLOOM. What did you pay for it?

Miss MACKENBERG. I paid from \$5 to \$25.

Mr. BLOOM. To be a minister?

Miss MACKENBERG. Yes, sir.

Mr. BLOOM. What right went with that?

Mr. HOUDINI. These ordinations tell the whole story.

Mr. McLEOD. They are already in the record at the last hearing. Do you care to answer any questions by Mrs. Coates at this time?

Miss MACKENBERG. If they are questions relating to anything I have said, I will be glad to.

Mrs. COATES. Will you ask this woman, when I came in the room, if I didn't say there was a pail of hot water between us?

Mr. HOUDINI. Is that true?

Miss MACKENBERG. No, sir.

Mr. McLEOD. Just one at a time is all we can have. We can not make a record with so many talking at once. You will have an opportunity later on.

Mr. HAMMER. Mr. Chairman, I do not mind the ladies standing up to listen, but I think they should refrain from talking.

Mrs. COATES. May I speak a word in my defense?

Mr. HAMMER. Mr. Chairman, I object. Mr. Houdini is now on the stand, and you can not take him off until this committee votes for it.

Mr. McLEOD. Have you finished, Mr. Houdini?

Mr. HOUDINI. When Miss Mackenberg is through.

Mr. McLEOD. Will you permit Mrs. Coates to ask these question on your time?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes, sir.

Mr. McLEOD. All right.

Mrs. COATES. Will you please state if I told you there was somebody standing back of my chair, and you asked me if it was your husband, and I said I would not tell you?

Miss MACKENBERG. No.

Mr. HOUDINI. What did she say?

Miss MACKENBERG. She said, "As I look upon you, a vapor exudes from your body, and the spirit of a man comes to you and he puts his arm around you and says he is very happy and for you not to worry." She said, "The spirits also tell me that you are going to take a trip very shortly, and going to meet some person and be placed in a different environment." I questioned her about it and she said, "That is all I can give you at the present time." At no time was she suspicious of me, because she asked me repeatedly to attend her lecture and to come to this meeting this morning.

Mr. HOUDINI. Did you lead her on in any way at all?

Miss MACKENBERG. No; in no way at all.

Mr. HOUDINI. She said she saw the spirits of your dead husband and your children?

Miss MACKENBERG. Yes.

Mrs. COATES. I deny that most positively.

Miss MACKENBERG. She said there was a spirit came in named Lena.

Mrs. COATES. I asked her, "Is that your daughter?" She said, "I don't know who it is." I said, "You are working for a concern, and if you don't stop working for them in 18 months it will kill you, because you have nervous prostration." She had on a pair of plain glasses. I said, "Why don't you take those glasses off and put them in your pocket? You know they are no good. You don't need them." I asked her if I didn't see her at Mr. Houdini's meeting in the second box. I want to repeat that question.

Miss MACKENBERG. You never said that.

Mrs. COATES. You are on oath.

Mr. RATHBONE. Let her finish.

Miss MACKENBERG. You said you had been to Houdini's performance and had quite a lengthy discussion or talk with Houdini after the show, and you thought he was very nice; and, in fact, you felt he was misdirected.

Mrs. COATES. I said I thought Mr. Houdini was mentally deranged.

MISS MACKENBERG. You said he was very nice, and you felt like putting your arms around him——

MRS. COATES. Oh, no.

MISS MACKENBERG. And try to cure him of his misdirection or his misdirected ideas.

MRS. COATES. Oh, no.

MR. HAMMER. I move the witness and the two ladies be required to sit down.

MRS. COATES. I want to make this statement, Mr. McLeod. It won't take me three minutes.

MR. MCLEOD. Is it a fact that you did have glasses on and she told you to take them off; that they were no good?

MISS MACKENBERG. No, sir. She didn't say they were no good. She asked me why did I wear glasses, were my eyes affected. She said, "Does the light hurt you?"

MRS. COATES. I said they were plain glasses, didn't I?

MISS MACKENBERG. No.

MR. HOUDINI. Did she suspect you of being an investigator?

MISS MACKENBERG. At no time.

MRS. COATES. I asked you what other kind of work you could do besides what you were doing. I said you would make a marvelous policewoman, and if you would go to the policewoman's bureau they would give you \$1,800 a year as an investigator; that you would make a marvelous investigator. Didn't I say that?

MISS MACKENBERG. No.

MRS. COATES. Didn't I tell you a man would come to you and offer you money as a bribe, and if you took it there would be an expose and you would get in trouble?

MISS MACKENBERG. Nobody has offered me a bribe.

MR. HOUDINI. She is getting in what she wants.

MR. HAMMER. She ought to get her testimony in, but not now.

MR. MCLEOD. You can ask her questions.

MRS. COATES. May I answer the statement she made about Congress and the White House?

MR. MCLEOD. No. You can only ask questions.

MRS. COATES. Then I will wait until I can testify.

MR. HOUDINI. Will you put that to your ear, and if you will watch me, here is how the mediums work, in what they call "day-light." [Handing a horn to Mr. Hammer.]

MR. HAMMER. All right.

MR. HOUDINI. Now, watch my throat and mouth, and then I will expose the method. Now, put it to your ear—and you have got to have faith. [Laughter.] You must recite the Lord's prayer and then just concentrate, and watch that I do not speak. If you hear a voice you speak to it just the same as if it were a living being. You say "Thank you, kind spirit." That is the rigamarole they go through. [Laughter.]

MR. HAMMER (after listening at the horn). I heard some kind of a rumpus.

MR. HOUDINI. If you have more faith you will hear a voice after a while. [Laughter.]

MR. HAMMER. I have not heard any voices yet.

Mr. HOUDINI. You have just got to concentrate a minute and you will get it.

Mr. HAMMER (after a pause). I hear the voice all right now. [Laughter.]

Mr. HOUDINI. You can hear the voice, and the mediums never watch as close as this. We are trying to give you a message. [After a pause.] Did you hear that?

Mr. HAMMER. Yes; very distinctly.

Mr. HOUDINI. You want to say, "How do you do, kind spirit." There is no movement of the lips. Would you like to receive a message?

Mrs. ROGERS. Yes.

(Mrs. Rogers listened at the horn.)

Mr. HOUDINI. Did you hear a message?

Mrs. ROGERS. Yes.

Mr. HOUDINI. Did it mention your name?

Mrs. ROGERS. Yes.

Mr. HOUDINI. Have I ever met you before in my life?

Mrs. ROGERS. Not that I know of.

Mr. HOUDINI. I gave her her name, and I never met her before. Is that your name?

Mrs. ROGERS. Yes.

Madame MARCIA. Can you give me a message from the dead?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes; but why should I break your heart and make you cry? [Laughter.] Do you remember the last message that your son left before he died?

Madame MARCIA. Yes; and you can't give it to me.

Mr. HOUDINI. I don't want to make you cry.

Madame MARCIA. I will test you before everybody in the committee. You can not do it, and you can not tell me under what conditions he died. I challenge you again and again.

Mr. RATHBONE. Mr. Chairman, I move that this committee have another session Thursday, to-morrow being the regular day for the District of Columbia committee to meet.

Mr. McLEOD. The committee will now adjourn until 10.30 o'clock next Thursday morning.

(Whereupon, at 12 o'clock noon the subcommittee adjourned until 10.30 o'clock a. m., Thursday, May 20, 1926.)

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE COMMITTEE
ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
Thursday May 20, 1926.

The committee met at 10.45 o'clock a. m., Hon. Clarence J. McLeod presiding.

Present: Representatives McLeod (presiding), Houston, Rathbone, and Hammer.

The CHAIRMAN. The meeting will come to order, and, as it has been practically decided that this will be the last meeting this session on this bill, it has been proposed proponents and opponents have equal time, and the proponents have the closing time. Therefore, it being now a quarter of eleven and, as we will adjourn at 12

o'clock, we will divide the time, so if there are a number of witnesses on both sides you may divide your time accordingly.

Mr. HOUSTON. How much time will you need to close, Mr. Houdini?

Mr. HOUDINI. I can't hear you.

Mr. HOUSTON. I say, how much time will you need to close?

Mr. HOUDINI. A half an hour will be satisfactory to me.

Mr. RATHBONE. A half an hour?

Mr. HOUDINI. A half an hour is ample time.

Mr. HAMMER. We can't get through with the hearings to-day, can we?

Mr. McLEOD. Three-quarters of an hour remains to the opponents of the bill.

Mr. HAMMER. Can we get through with the hearings to-day? Do you think that will be time enough?

The CHAIRMAN. We will try to do so. How many proponents are there in the room that care to be heard this morning?

(A number of those present raised their hands.)

Mr. HAMMER. And now, the opponents of the measure?

(A number of those present at the end of the table raised their hands.)

The CHAIRMAN. There are five in all. Well, then, if the people who are about to testify will confine themselves to seven or eight minutes each, even five minutes each, they can be heard and allow the committee some time to ask questions. We might let some one in charge of the different sides allot the time.

Mr. STRACK. Mr. Chairman, I feel that there is a little injustice to our side of this. Mr. Houdini had most of the time Tuesday and most of the time yesterday, and now you want to give us just the same amount of time that he gets.

Mr. HOUDINI. They interrupted my witnesses. If you will examine the record you will find that they took up a great deal of my time all the time that I was testifying, and may I ask that no matter who is on the stand, that we have decorum.

The CHAIRMAN. Doctor, Strack, you will proceed with your witnesses; we will get on the best we can, and confine yourselves to three quarters of an hour.

STATEMENT OF H. P. STRACK, SECRETARY OF THE NATIONAL SPIRITUALISTS' ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, WASHINGTON, D. C.

Mr. STRACK. Mr. Chairman, I would like to review briefly some of the testimony that has come before this committee during this hearing. The committee will unquestionably recall the testimony of a man giving his name as Mr. Wiess, of Philadelphia—

The CHAIRMAN. Pardon me, give us your name and address and whom you represent before we proceed.

Mr. STRACK. My name is H. P. Strack; my title is Reverend; my position is that of secretary of the National Spiritualists' Association of America; and my home address is 600 Pennsylvania Avenue SE., Washington, D. C.

In the testimony given by the gentleman from Philadelphia he referred to a seance conducted by a medium named Slade. If the

committee will remember, in this man's testimony he stated the medium would take his foot and kick a book, and that the book would float into the air. That, members of the committee, is a concrete evidence of mediumship—the law of levitation, forcing that book to remain in the air after it had been kicked by the medium. Had the man giving the testimony stated the book had fallen immediately after it had gone into the air, then there would have been a semblance of fraud in that demonstration. Again, I wish to call the attention of the committee to a trumpet demonstration before your honorable body, and also the name of Mrs. Benninghofen being mentioned, and that she now is exposing the fraudulent presentation of trumpet mediumship. The fact remains that Mr. Benninghofen was a candidate for the office of mayor in the city of Anderson, Ind. He was defeated in that election. Following his defeat Mrs. Benninghofen denounced the phenomena of trumpet mediumship. Gentlemen, it would be impossible for Mrs. Benninghofen to return every fee to the individuals whom she claims she had defrauded; but, if her phenomena is fraudulent, why does she retain that tainted money? Why does she continue to use the fortune she thus accumulated? Why does not she give it to some charitable institution where it can do some good?

Again, I wish to call the attention of the committee to the statements made by the chief witness of the prosecution, if you please, that there are no honest mediums; that they are all fakes and frauds. I wish to call the attention of the committee to the statements made before the Senate committee on February 26. Your speaker propounded this question to that man, and asked him if he would include in his statement the Davenport brothers, with whom he had sat for psychic development in days gone by. The gentleman replied to that question by stating:

The reason I have not included the Davenport brothers was because they are personal friends of mine, and I am a student of Dana Davenport.

There, gentlemen of the committee, is an admission from the man who says there is not an honest medium, that they are all fakes and frauds; yet when it comes to his personal friends he believes what they say and do.

In presenting this bill to Congress to enact a law in the District of Columbia which would, in a measure, suppress the practice of mediumship in the District of Columbia, I am asking you members of the committee to take this into consideration: First, the opposition to the presentation of our argument comes from a man who confessed before this committee yesterday that he had no religion.

I am surprised, and I am dumfounded that the Confederate Churches in the District of Columbia should accept the statements and the words of a pronounced atheist and infidel.

Psychic phenomena do exist, and, when you are passing this measure I am asking you to differentiate between fraud and the genuine. There are men who are counterfeiting our Nation's currency. Would we condemn the currency coming from the United States Treasury as being fraudulent because others outside dare to counterfeit it?

Again, statements have been made before this honorable committee that the existing law providing a \$25 license fee per year permits

under license so-called mediums to rob the public. That license permits a medium to function, and act according to the laws of the spirit in our conventions as spiritualist ministers. That law does not promote, neither does the paying of the license fee permit any medium to commit any crime or any fraud. I have in my pocket a permit from the District of Columbia to drive my motor vehicle over the streets of this city, but that does not permit me to violate all the traffic rules enacted by our Congress. There is before you another measure to license chiropractors in the District of Columbia. Should that bill pass, and should the chiropractors be licensed, would that permit them to make adjustments or would it permit them to break the necks of their clients? We have a police department. We have courts, civil courts that we have recourse to, and if there is anyone perpetrating fraudulent practices touching the public, or individuals, if you please, those who have been robbed have resource to the police department and the courts. I want to assure this committee that your speaker is just as much interested as Houdini, and perhaps more so, in the elimination of frauds in the religion of spiritualism. [Applause.]

It was not so long ago that I received a call from the first precinct of the police department, and the officer asked me what I knew of a certain medium. That one came from Providence, R. I., to the first precinct here. I gave that information and the medium was told to leave town between sunset and sunrise. It was not long before evidence came to our office of another medium whose record I know. Immediately your speaker went to headquarters, and I met Detectives Fowler and Flatherty, and, were they here, they would testify to the truthfulness of my statement. I advised them of this man. I showed them where he was stopping at the time, and they said, "If he puts on a circle, I shall swear out a warrant for his arrest." The man was never allowed to hold the circle in the city of Washington. He knew I had his record.

Mr. RATHBONE. Would the gentleman find it agreeable if I asked him a few questions at this point?

Mr. STRACK. You may ask me questions.

Mr. RATHBONE. I want to ask some questions—

Mr. STRACK. I would like to make some other statements in reference to the bill—

Mr. RATHBONE. I think it might be helpful if we could take up this bill together and analyze the bill. If you prefer, though, to make a speech yourself, it is all right, but if you care to have me ask a few questions I will do so. I will leave that to you.

Mr. STRACK. All right; ask the questions.

Mr. RATHBONE. It is essential, of course, I take it, that we should know your attitude regarding the different things contained in this bill.

Mr. STRACK. Certainly, sir.

Mr. RATHBONE. Is the bill before you?

Mr. STRACK. I have it; yes, sir.

Mr. RATHBONE. Taking up the bill, I call your attention to the first part there, on the first page, line 7.

Mr. STRACK. Line 7; I have it.

Mr. RATHBONE. Have you got it before you?

Mr. STRACK. Yes; the first page, line 7.

Mr. RATHBONE (reading):

Any person pretending to tell fortunes where lost or stolen goods may be found.

Now, does your association claim, or is there any claim that they can find lost or stolen articles?

Mr. HAMMER. The word "or" is left out of the first line [reading]:

Any person pretending to tell fortunes where lost or stolen goods may be found, or any person who, by gain, etc.

Mr. RATHBONE. I am frank to say that I think the bill is not properly drawn as to language.

Mr. HAMMER. What is the number of the bill here?

Mr. RATHBONE. H. R. 8989. If I recall, Mr. Bloom's attention was called to that in the first hearing. I think it was in the hearing, "Any person pretending to tell fortunes or where lost or stolen goods may be found; any person who," etc.

In my opinion I think the bill would have to be redrafted.

Taking it up clause by clause [reading]:

Any person pretending to tell fortunes where lost—

And there the word "or" should come in—

or to tell where lost or stolen goods may be found—

Mr. STRACK. Yes.

Mr. RATHBONE. Now, first, are there any spiritualists to your knowledge—is it contended that they fall within that provision of the bill? In other words, do they pretend to locate lost fortune or stolen goods.

Mr. STRACK. That is where the National Spiritualists' Association of America is interested in your bill. We do not claim to be fortune tellers. There are not fortune tellers in the National Spiritualists' Association of America. We do have spiritual mediums. The reason why I am opposing the bill as it stands is we think we ought to have such wording in a bill that will define closely the difference between fortune telling and spiritual mediumship. [Applause.]

Mr. RATHBONE. Well—

Mr. STRACK (interposing). Just a minute, Congressman. In an article I sent to the 'Times on "Inspiration" I gave this definition, in distinguishing between fortune telling and mediumship:

The fortune teller is one who pretends to tell you of coming events without any basis of present observed condition for forming that opinion. The medium may receive a communication from the spirit world which foretells coming events, but it is merely an incident to the communication, because a spirit is able to form opinion based upon the condition he observed in the spirit side of life that the human can not observe from this side of life.

That is the difference between fortune telling and spirit mediumship. I have said, and I say again, that there should be a line of demarcation. How can you prove a fraud when you know nothing about the law producing spirit phenomena? In Boston mediums were arrested under a fortune telling law. In these cases there was

no proof. In California it was the same way. In San Francisco mediums were arrested, and they were arrested in the city of Chicago. And in other cases they were arrested when they practiced. In the city of Cleveland others were convicted under a similar law.

Mr. RATHBONE. Let me interrupt you there. Let me say this first: I have just one desire in this matter and that is to come to a just conclusion. I think we will progress better if we will just take it up by question and answer, if it is agreeable to you.

Mr. STRACK. Well, I wanted to make a statement.

Mr. RATHBONE. Then you do not care to take it up by question and answer?

Mr. STRACK. Brother Chairman, I would like to read this court decision in answer to Mr. Rathbone's question.

Mr. RATHBONE. You do not have anything to answer. I am just trying to bring out the truth. I am not asking you anything.

Mr. STRACK. You raised the question of fortune telling.

Mr. RATHBONE. I was talking about the provisions of the bill, and expressed the opinion that we could make better progress by the question and answer. This method will be more satisfactory both to you and to ourselves.

Mr. STRACK. All right.

Mr. RATHBONE. This first clause, in my judgment, refers only to lost and stolen goods, and ascertaining where they are. I think that is the only construction to be placed on it. Do you believe that spiritualists fall within that class? In other words, do they attempt to locate lost or stolen goods?

Mr. STRACK. To my knowledge, they do not.

Mr. RATHBONE. Then, this portion of the bill does not hit the spiritualists at all, does it?

Mr. STRACK. Figuratively speaking, no; but, in the course of a communication, should something be stolen and located the medium receiving it has no choice in the matter.

Mr. RATHBONE. Now, let us go to the next one:

Any person who, by game or device, slight of hand, pretending, fortune telling, or by any trick or other means, by the use of cards or other implements or instruments, fraudulently obtains from another property of any description—

What does that mean? This bill is so badly drawn that it is not even grammatical.

Mr. HOUSTON. You will notice that the clause you have just read clearly is limited to fraudulent practice.

Mr. RATHBONE. Well, it says: "obtains * * * property"; it does not say money.

Mr. HOUSTON. Whereas the first clause refers in no way to fraud.

Mr. RATHBONE. We have passed the fraud, because they say it is not applicable to them. This is only obtaining property through means of fraud.

Mr. HOUSTON. Exactly.

Mr. RATHBONE. Do you claim that spiritualists are in any way interfered with there? You do not claim that spiritualists are interfered with there? You can just answer that yes or no.

Mr. STRACK. No. If there is anyone doing it, as an official of the National Spiritualists' Association I would like to know that.

Mr. RATHBONE. Well, does this bill interfere with you there?

Mr. STRACK. No.

Mr. RATHBONE. Then, the next section [reading]:

Any person pretending to remove spells, or to sell charms for protection, or to unite the separated, shall be considered a disorderly person.

Do the spiritualists come within this class? Do they remove spells or sell charms for protection?

Mr. STACK. I can only speak for our association. We do not permit it under the laws of our association.

Mr. RATHBONE. Then there is nothing in the bill as prepared, if my construction of it is correct, which applies to spiritualists at all?

Mr. STRACK. There is only one thing there where it might apply.

Mr. RATHBONE. Let us have that.

Mr. STRACK. And, that is perfectly legitimate. Spiritualist ministers, as well as others, are often sought for council, and the provision that you have here: "or to unite the separated," would not only apply to spiritualist ministers, but it would apply to the ministers of every faith and the judges of your courts [applause] if we live the life and practice the religion we teach whether we are spiritualists or members of any other denomination.

Mr. HAMMER. I suggest that we should modify that. Someone comes in to see a lawyer about a divorce and if he can unite the family and keep them from being separated. He has done right.

Mr. RATHBONE. I think that is very good. I think it is one of the duties of a good lawyer, for instance, in case of a domestic quarrel to get the parties together and prevent the divorce. That is my conception of a good lawyer.

Madam MARCIA. "Blessed are the peacemakers."

Mr. RATHBONE. I will ask the gentleman in conclusion whether he thinks that some bill might be drafted by common consent here and mutual cooperation which would hit real abuses if they exist, but would not interfere with anything that could be considered a proper and legitimate exercise of free thought religion. I say that, based upon what the witness has said, that there is nothing in this bill, except possibly the exception of the last few words that hits spiritualism. What do you think about drawing up a bill to remedy any abuses that might exist, that is, by some other bill, or changing this bill? You want, as I understand it, to prevent abuses as much as anyone else.

Mr. STRACK. Yes, sir; I am with you.

Mr. RATHBONE. Can't we get together on something of that nature?

Mr. HOUSTON. Will the gentleman from Illinois yield for a suggestion?

Mr. RATHBONE. Yes, sir.

Mr. HOUSTON. The following form, as I read the bill, would accomplish those objects, and if so changed would read:

Any person who, by pretending to tell fortunes or by pretending to tell where lost or stolen goods may be found; or any person who, by game or device, sleight of hand, pretending, fortune telling, or by any trick or other means, by the use of cards or other implements or instruments, fraudulently obtains from another person property of any description; any person pretending to remove spells, or to sell charms for protection, or thereby to unite the separated shall be considered a disorderly person.

Now, that makes it its change only—that is, the only change is that when they intend to commit fraud by any of these present means in there and subject to the penalties provided by this bill.

Mr. STRACK. I think that is all right.

Mr. RATHBONE. Yes.

Mr. HOUSTON. "Implements and instruments" is one and the same thing.

Mr. RATHBONE. I think the essential part of the bill is this second clause.

Mr. HAMMER. Yes.

Mr. HOUSTON. We, of course, as lawyers, know that it would have to be strictly construed, and I do not think there is anything in that other clause but what is covered by existing law. I can not get that out of my head. I think there is a law against false pretense.

Mr. RATHBONE. Yes; the common law.

Mr. HAMMER. The only difference is it might be property and not money.

Mr. HOUSTON. Generally, as a lawyer, I realize that in prosecution in false-pretense cases the great difficulty is proof. It is a question of proof, and you must prove the intention to defraud. It is almost impossible to prove the intention in the mind of a person.

Mr. RATHBONE. In a case of prosecution for obtaining money under false pretenses there has got to be some substantial pretense. There has got to be some construction of this language that requires that as a matter of proof.

Mr. STRACK. May I continue now, Mr. Chairman?

Mr. HAMMER. I would like the gentleman to tell us why he objects to the bill with the amendment which Mr. Houston suggests.

Mr. STRACK. I did not say I objected to it. I said it listened good to me.

Mr. HOUSTON. That simply limits and prohibits the practice of fraud.

Mr. STRACK. Might I be heard further, Mr. Chairman?

The CHAIRMAN. Proceed.

Mr. STRACK. I have asked and stated that there should be a line of demarcation between fortune telling and mediumship. The bill as it stands is good, and I accept your bill as it is amended, but there is still this danger to spiritual mediums connected with our association and with churches that some man that is investigating, that is an investigator, can come into a spiritual medium's office and go out and swear to anything they want to in a court; and what protection has the medium got?

Mr. HOUSTON. That is always possible in any criminal case.

Mr. HAMMER. Always true; and they can do that now.

Mr. STRACK. I will read a portion of this Illinois law. I have it here [reading]:

That the provisions of this act shall not be construed to include, prohibit, or interfere with the exercise of the spiritual functions or offices of any priest, minister, or accredited representative of any religion: *And provided further*, The provisions of this act shall not be construed to include or refer to the practice of the religious belief known as spiritualism.

That, gentlemen of the committee, that last clause permitted one of the largest fakes in the city of Chicago to go free. She

claimed that she was a spiritualist and, under that provision the court nolle prossed the case. For that reason I have presented to the Senate committee, and I will present also to the House committee an amended amendment I had offered, leaving out that clause [reading]:

That the provisions of this act shall not be construed to include, prohibit, or interfere with the exercise of the spiritual functions or offices of any priest, minister, or accredited representative of any religion: *And provided further*, The provisions of this act shall not be construed to include or refer to any attempted communication with the spirit world by or through mediums who practice their faculties under the direction of the National Spiritualists' Association of the United States of America, or any of its auxiliary bodies.

I will leave that with you, Mr. Chairman, for consideration. As the gentleman stated, there must be a decided proof of when a medium is arrested for fraud of whether there was a flagrant, premeditated intent to commit fraud, or whether the message coming has been misunderstood, and accepted under those conditions as a possible fraudulent demonstration.

A short while ago I was in Congressman Bloom's office conferring with him on this bill, and he was telling me of the city ordinances he had received. He read one to me coming from Omaha, Nebr., stating that it was more drastic than the bill offered here. I immediately wrote to a member of one of our churches in Omaha and asked him to forward to me a copy of that order. This is his reply in part [reading]:

Your very kind favor of the 15th instant to hand, and contents duly noted, and in reply will say that I was truly surprised to hear that the city of Omaha had a very drastic ordinance against mediumship. We spiritualists here in Omaha do not know anything about it and I do not understand from what source that Mr. Bloom received his information.

I will say, however, that about five or six years ago the city commission passed an ordinance in which all mediums were required to get a permit from the city clerk and also to pay for a license to operate in the city of Omaha, Nebr.

That ordinance did not last very long. They arrested a medium for operating without a license or a permit from the city, and the case went to court. The attorney for the defendant called the attention of the judge to the decision of District Judge Holmes, of Lincoln, Lancaster County, Nebr.—Lincoln is the State capital. The judge took the case under advisement and rendered for the defendant, and there has been no prosecution or arrests of any mediums since that time. I believe this must be what Mr. Bloom must have been informed of as Omaha's drastic ordinance.

I am herewith inclosing you two printed copies of the Judge Holmes's decision in regard to spiritualist mediumship and hope that they will enlighten the people who do not really understand our mode of religion.

The rest of the letter contains matter of a personal nature.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you wish to leave that with the committee?

Mr. STRACK. I will leave Judge Holmes's decision.

Mr. HAMMER. Can we not have another meeting of the committee to-morrow?

Mr. RATHBONE. The full Committee of the District of Columbia has a special meeting scheduled for to-morrow morning.

The CHAIRMAN. That is true; yes.

Mr. HAMMER. Maybe we could have one to-night, then.

The CHAIRMAN. We will proceed and see how we get along.

Mr. STRACK. I will read Judge Holmes's decision [reading]:

District court, Lancaster County. October term. Monday, December 9, A. D. 1901. Fifty-first day

And on this day the following proceedings were had and done before the Hon. Edward B. Holmes, judge, presiding:

The State of Nebraska v. Garrett Smith Klock. 1597. E-300

This case came on to be heard upon the appeal of the defendant, Garrett Smith Klock, from the decision of the police judge of the city of Lincoln, imposing a fine upon the said defendant for engaging in clairvoyancy in the city of Lincoln, Lancaster County, Nebr., and demanding and receiving fees for readings as a clairvoyant, without first having secured a license as required by the ordinances of the city of Lincoln.

The city of Lincoln having appeared by its city attorney and said defendant by H. L. Brown, his counsel, and the said parties waived a jury and stipulated to abide by the decision of this court, evidence was adduced, argument of counsel was had, and the case duly submitted.

From the evidence adduced at trial thereof the court finds the following facts:

First. That on the 2d day of December, 1901, the said defendant, Garrett Smith Klock, was duly elected and ordained minister of spiritualistic society incorporated under the laws of the State of Nebraska providing for the incorporation of religious societies.

Second. That as a part of the rites and ceremonies of said organization the practices of clairvoyance was engaged in as proof of the teachings and doctrines of the spiritualists' belief.

Third. That as a minister of such spiritualistic organization, and claiming to possess clairvoyant powers, the defendant engaged in the practice of clairvoyance and held readings as a clairvoyant, both among those belonging to such spiritualistic organization and those seeking the said defendant and engaging him in the manifestation of his powers as aforesaid, and that the defendant did demand and receive fees for such clairvoyant readings and spiritualistic manifestations produced by him.

Fourth. That the defendant as minister of such organization received no salary, but under the provisions of his said church organization was authorized to demand and receive such fees for the exercise of his clairvoyant powers.

Fifth. Spiritualism is defined as "the belief that departed spirits hold intercourse with mortals by means of physical phenomena as by rappings, or during abnormal mental state as in trances or the like, commonly manifested through a person of special susceptibility and is believed by the members of his organization to possess mediumistic powers—"

The CHAIRMAN. Doctor, pardon my interruption, but in order to save time I suggest that you just simply put that into the record.

Mr. HAMMER. Yes; every member of the committee understands the law. That is a law decision. The Supreme Court more than one time has touched the very principle you are taking up.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, put it into the record.

(The balance of the decision referred to by the chairman is as follows:)

A power, while in a mesmeric state of discerning of objects not perceptible by the senses in their normal condition, hence the spiritualist believes the doctrine in opposition to the materialists, namely, that all that exists is spirit or soul. That what is called the external world is a succession of notions impressed upon the mind by the Deity. Does this constitute a religion? Religion is defined as the outward act or form by which men indicate their recognition of a God, or God's having power over their destiny, to whom obedience, service, and honor are due; or, again, religion is that feeling or expression of human love, fear, or awe of some superhuman and overruling power, whatever by profession or belief, by observance of rites and ceremonies of the doctrinal teachings of any organization. It can not be claimed that it does constitute a religion, for many of the rites and ceremonies of the Christian church, in teaching of theology, would appear ridiculous and non-

sensical to some, as does the practice of clairvoyance and the idea that the spirit of those departed from this life hold intercourse with the living.

Sixth. The question, therefore, presented to this court by the evidence adduced at this hearing is whether or not the city council can legislate specially as against the spiritualists practicing clairvoyance, and compel a license therefor. The constitution of Nebraska guarantees to all subjects of the State an inalienable right to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences and provides that no preference shall be given by law to any religious society, nor shall any interference with the right of conscience be permitted. The ordinance upon which this prosecution is had is certainly an interference with the rights and privileges of those believing in spiritualism, a religion that seeks the piety of those believing in its teachings and is, therefore, special legislation and prohibited by the constitution of this State and the ordinance upon which prosecution is had is therefore void. This action is therefore dismissed and defendants discharged.

Given under my hand this 9th day of December, 1901.

EDWARD P. HOLMES, *Judge*.

There was a statement before this committee, a display made of ordinations. I am here to emphatically state that none of those ordinations were accepted by the National Spiritualists' Association.

I have here a copy of an associate ministers certificate. I have here a blank form of our license certificate. I have here a blank form of our mediumship certificate. I have here a blank form of our ordination certification.

The statement also was made that our constitution and by-laws have no educational requirement. In the rear of our constitution and by-laws you will find posted amendments of 1923 and 1924 and 1925 on our educational requirements, that all candidates for ordination must pass an examination and prove to our committee that they have passed satisfactory examinations in general courses of our bureau of education. Our course is similar to other courses. We are in a state of evolution. We are coming forward gradually, perfecting our organization, and are more stringent in our requirements. We try to avoid abuses as much as anybody, and are just as much interested in doing so as the members of this committee. These investigations have proved to us more than ever that it is necessary for our association to go on record, and we are ready to go on record to substantiate the record we have made in fighting fraudulent mediumship. I want to ask Mr. Houdini if he has ever heard of the Blue Book?

MR. HOUDINI. Oh, you are wasting your time. Use it for the committee. I will answer you later.

MR. HOUSTON. What is the National Spiritualist Association?

MR. STRACK. It is a religious body incorporated under the religious body act of the District of Columbia. According to our last statistical reports, we had 690 churches in good standing. What I mean by "in good standing" is this, that they have paid per capita taxes and dues.

MR. HOUSTON. Are there any other spiritualist churches outside of the National Spiritualists' Association?

MR. STRACK. Oh, yes; there are many of them.

MR. HOUSTON. Is there any other National Association of Spiritualist Churches?

MR. STRACK. Yes, sir; but not with headquarters in the District of Columbia. There is the National Spiritualist Alliance, having their

headquarters at Lake Pleasant, Mass., and there is the Mediums' Alliance, with headquarters in Detroit. I understand also that there is an International Brotherhood of Spiritualists with headquarters in the city of Lincoln, Nebr. None of those organizations are in any way related or affiliated with our body. We are the oldest organization of spiritualists in the United States.

Mr. HOUSTON. How does one differentiate from the other? Are you sufficiently acquainted with the teachings in the different organizations to tell?

Mr. STRACK. Their teachings in the main are very similar. The teachings of spirit communication, accepting from the spirit world messages that come to enable us to live our lives in accordance with the spiritual instruction received. Those are the teachings of the churches. Are there any questions?

Mr. RATHBONE. Mr. Chairman, I have been told that there are some others who want to be heard. I think there are some colored ladies here that want to be heard.

Mr. HAMMER. Yes; I understand there are some colored people who would like to be heard.

Mr. RATHBONE. I think they ought to be heard.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes; they will be heard. I believe that Senator Fletcher's wife is here and wants to be heard for a few moments.

Mr. RATHBONE. I think these other people ought to be heard just as quickly and briefly as possible.

Mr. HAMMER. I would suggest that we hold a session this afternoon, but the agricultural bill is in the House this afternoon.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes; but we can not do it.

Mr. HAMMER. I move, Mr. Chairman, that we have a meeting to-night and get everybody here. Then we could divide the time. If Mr. Houdini has had too much of the time or the majority of the time, why not give the others a little additional time and let them be heard. I think we can have a bill here that would be satisfactory to everybody.

Mr. HOUDINI. May I have the half hour that was agreed on when they have finished?

Mr. STRACK. Do any other members of the committee desire to ask me any questions?

Mr. HAMMER. His time has expired. The time allotted to the opponents of the measure has expired.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes; your time has expired.

Madam MARCIA. I want to suggest—

Mr. HAMMER (interposing). I want to protest. Some colored people are here that want to be heard and I think they should be heard.

Madam MARCIA. I only want just three seconds.

Mr. HAMMER. And then you see there are some other people in the audience, four or five people I think, that ought to be heard, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. How much time do you want, Mr. Houdini?

Mr. HOUDINI. I will gladly yield some of my time to Mrs. Fletcher, but Mrs. Fletcher is the only one to whom I will yield any of my time.

Mr. RATHBONE. You understand, that you in your rebuttal would only have the right to answer back a new matter that was brought out in a hearing here?

Mr. HOUSTON. Oh, that is never enforced in American courts now.

Mr. RATHBONE. Yes; my experience is that it is enforced.

Mr. HAMMER. Oh, I have seldom seen it enforced in my life, in 30 years' practice.

Mr. HOUSTON. At the last meeting before we closed the hearing of the opponents of the measure I personally told Mr. Houdini that his rebuttal would have to be confined to replying to new matter brought out by the other side, and that no new matter would be introduced.

Mr. HAMMER. I am opposed to enforcing any such rule here.

The CHAIRMAN. You are going to use your time on new matter?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes, but I want to hear what Mrs. Fletcher has to say.

(Mr. Houdini yielded 15 minutes of his time to Mrs. Fletcher.)

STATEMENT OF MRS. DUNCAN U. FLETCHER, WASHINGTON, D. C.

Mrs. FLETCHER. If I may have as much time as the gentleman at the other end of the table [indicating] has had in displaying his pitiable attempt to show before this committee the trumpet work and the slate writing, that is all I want, and I will be perfectly satisfied.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you want five minutes now?

Mrs. FLETCHER. I think he had at least 10 minutes one day and at least 10 or 15 minutes another day.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you care to be heard at this time?

Mrs. FLETCHER. It does not make any difference. I should say some things that would use more than five minutes.

The CHAIRMAN. How much time do you want, Mrs. Fletcher—15 or 20 minutes?

Mrs. FLETCHER. I think 15 minutes would be sufficient.

The CHAIRMAN. Would you agree to that, Mr. Houdini, to allow Mrs. Fletcher 15 minutes of your time?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes; gladly.

Mr. HOUSTON. If he yields to it, it is all right.

Mrs. FLETCHER. My home is in Florida, and I live at present in the District of Columbia. I will not presume to take much of your time. Too much has been spent upon words which have no bearing upon the question before us, but had I not made a promise that I would help this cause at any time, in any place, or in any way in my power, I would not be here. I have been an investigator for 35 years. I am astonished that the poor imitation which was displayed before you the other day got over. It is no more like a real demonstration which occurs at a spiritual seance than darkness is like daylight. I would venture to say that there is no one in this room who could produce for me a message from my father in his own handwriting with his own particular signature.

And here let me say that the phenomena has been proved. As an illustration of such phenomena in this seance at the same time four other messages were being written simultaneously, each in

a different style of handwriting, and the whole performance consumed about two minutes. There were at least six dozen words. And they were not from Benjamin Franklin or George Washington or Queen Elizabeth, but from some of my own dear friends in the invisible world.

Now, as for prophecy—what is so wicked and unlawful in the gift of prophecy? I have had in Washington within the space of two years three prophecies made to me by a medium in deep trance. The medium did not know what she was saying. She does not know to this day what she said. Those three prophecies were fulfilled to the letter. They were of unusual occurrences, not what would happen to any individual in the ordinary run of life.

Now, the statement has been made here that if this thing is true, why do not our mediums give tips as to races and stock, oil ventures, and things of that kind?

Many of our mediums can do so. It is not the desire of the spirit world to increase the size of the pocketbook, but to enlarge the size of the human soul. [Applause.] If anybody will read Dennis Bradley's book called "Toward the Stars," he will find in there a chapter where a medium, Valentine, put his finger on three successive winners in the races in England. After he had accomplished this feat Mr. Bradley said he could do no more, because it was not the desire of his spirit guides that he should use his power in that way.

Now, as to the charms. I have had some very dear little friends during my life who belonged to a certain denomination. These little friends wore about their necks medals, I think they called them, which had been blessed by the leaders of their faith, and for which donations had been made to the church. If this clause goes through, what will be done with that practice? It might be a very good opening to an organization known as the K. K. K. [Applause.]

Now, what is so wrong and wicked and unlawful about locating lost articles? I had a very important lost article located through directions given me by mediums. Forty-five years ago there came into the possession of my father a valuable violin. The owner of that violin had passed into the higher life. The boy who inherited the violin was 8 years of age and left the violin with my father and disappeared. Nothing was heard from him. I supposed he had joined his father in the higher life. About two years ago I began to get messages which interested me in the old violin. I followed the directions given me through some mediums and through those directions I located that boy now grown, as you realize, to manhood. He had lived in France, and he had lived in Russia, England, and he has been eight times around the world. He had known the city of Jacksonville had been destroyed entirely by fire, and supposed that his violin, if it had been in existence, had gone that way. I found the man, and he found his violin entirely through the advice and suggestion I received through mediums.

Mr. RATHBONE. May I interrupt you a moment, Mrs. Fletcher?

Mrs. FLETCHER. Yes.

Mr. RATHBONE. I have seen some remarkable things done along certain lines, but there was no claim they were done through spiritual

mediumship. This locating of the violin, or the locating of lost and stolen articles, do the spiritualists claim that can be done only through spiritualism, or done through spiritism or other means?

Mrs. FLETCHER. I know nothing about other means. I only know about spiritualistic mediumship.

Mr. RATHBONE. Have you ever seen Mr. Houdini when he was blindfolded by a man and when he would get into an automobile and be drawn all around through a large place, and stop and get out and finally locate something that had been hidden away? I have seen that, and I suppose a good many of us have. Would the spiritualists say that had been spiritism or could the same thing be accomplished through other means?

Mrs. FLETCHER. May I say that these messages purported to come from my father who was interested that I should return the violin to the boy to whom it belonged?

Now, as to honest mediums. The assertion has been made here that there is no such a thing, or that probably there is no such a thing as an honest medium. My mother was a natural medium. Among the first things that I remember are certain very marvelous things which had happened in the family circle. I have for 35 years investigated the subject. I have never come in contact with a medium who was dishonest. I have come in contact with some who had less power and some who had more power, but I have never met one who was dishonest. I have had in my own home circles of some of the most prominent people in Washington. I will not name them. You might be surprised. They were ministers, doctors, officials, and world-renowned writers. I have heard them talk and carry on conversations with their invisible dear ones, in the light, in the sunlight, in the electric light, without trumpet, without paraphernalia of any kind whatsoever, except the medium merely sitting in their midst in deep trance. I have heard dozens of conversations of this kind. I have taken part in many of them myself. My experience has been that mediums have a hard time to get along. Instead of being immensely wealthy they have a rush of work for a few days, and then many days when there is nothing. Often they are absolutely dependent. Their work is the giving of a certain vital force which undermines their strength, to which they succumb.

Mr. HOUDINI. It is now my time, Mr. Chairman, and I would like to speak.

Mrs. FLETCHER. I have finished. I thank you, Mr. Weiss.

The CHAIRMAN. It is your time.

Madam MARCIA. I would like to make a statement.

The CHAIRMAN. It is up to Mr. Houdini if he cares to yield.

Madam MARCIA. I yielded yesterday some of my time. It will take me just five seconds to read a letter I have.

The CHAIRMAN. I can not give you any more time. It would have to come from Mr. Houdini.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENT OF MR. HARRY H. HOUDINI

Mr. HOUDINI. My religion and my belief in the Almighty has been assailed. I stated yesterday that I do believe in the Almighty. I have always believed and I will always believe. I am a Mason, and

you must believe in God to be a Mason. My character has been assailed. I would like to have as a witness here Mrs. Houdini. [Laughter.]

Step this way, Mrs. Houdini. One of the witnesses said I was a brute and that I was vile and I was crazy. Won't you step this way? I want the chairman to see you. I will have been married, on June 22, 32 years to this girl. On June 22, 1926, is when we will celebrate our thirty-second anniversary. There are no medals and no ribbons on me, but when a girl will stick to a man for 32 years as she did and when she will starve with me and work with me through thick and thin, it is a pretty good recommendation. Outside of my great mother, Mrs. Houdini has been my greatest friend.

Have I shown traces of being crazy, unless it was about you? [Laughter.]

Mrs. HOUDINI. No.

Mr. HOUDINI. Am I brutal to you, or vile?

Mrs. HOUDINI. No.

Mr. HOUDINI. Am I a good boy?

Mrs. HOUDINI. Yes.

Mr. HOUDINI. Thank you, Mrs. Houdini. [Applause.]

It is stated—it has been stated here—that the mediums do not take property. I can prove that they have taken millions of dollars. There is a local case here. I will have the lady speak for a few minutes. A local medium was instrumental in taking or has taken \$60,000 from her in property. The case is not settled as yet. The lady in question is Mrs. MacDowell, and the medium, in order to cover her tracks, accused this lady of being a medium. This lady never gave a seance and never went into a trance, but a local medium told Mr. Hubbell to say that she was a medium. In this way they would get the property back. I will call Mrs. MacDowell.

STATEMENT OF MRS. MABEL RAWSON HIRONS MacDOWELL

The CHAIRMAN. Will you state your name?

Mrs. MacDOWELL. My name is Mabel Rawson Hirons MacDowell. I am the widow of James Alexander MacDowell, of Philadelphia, a well-known citizen. I was a bride and lived in old Carpenters' Hall for two years, where the First Congress met. My husband was born there. I am here to tell the committee of an experience with fraudulent mediums of Washington, D. C. I was robbed of \$60,000 worth of property, which is everything my husband had accumulated through his relations and 12 years of hard work.

My ancestors have fought through the colonial wars, the French and Indian wars, and all the wars in our history, and they are well known in every State in the Union and have been pioneers and have filtered into every State in the Union.

Dr. Julian B. Hubbell instituted a bill against me in the circuit court of Rockville under the advisement of a medium named Julia C. Warnicke. The suit ended disastrously for me, because I was not able to find the notary public before whom Julian B. Hubbell acknowledged the deed. I went to see this medium and talked with her. She resembles this lady here [indicating Madam Marcia]. I am not sure, because I never saw her until to-day. Julia C. Warnicke did live on Q Street in Washington, D. C. I have the papers, and legal and authentic evidence to prove my innocence. I

am here to simply make this brief statement and to leave same in the hands of the committee for their perusal at their leisure. I am appearing here because I think I should do this, in order that no other person will be robbed as I have been robbed through a medium. This bill should be passed, and I am here to stand by it.

Mr. HAMMER. Doctor Hubbell is dead, is he not?

Mrs. MACDOWELL. No; Dr. Julian B. Hubbell is still alive and lives at Rockville. I have the record and everything concerning the case here to leave in the hands of this committee. I know that I can not tell a lie about this matter because I would be prosecuted if I did.

The CHAIRMAN. Just put those papers on the table. We will put them in the record.

Mr. RATHBONE. Is he not a very old man?

Mrs. MACDOWELL. Yes; he is now about 64 years old. In regard to Clara Barton, my grandfather was Clara Barton's family physician for many years, and my father was the only man mentioned in her will at the time of her death.

Madam MARCIA. Just a minute please. She accuses me of being this medium.

The CHAIRMAN. One of the members of the committee desires to ask a question.

Madam MARCIA. Well, I don't care about the members of the committee. She inferred that I am Mrs. Warnicke.

Mrs. MACDOWELL. I said she resembled you.

Madam MARCIA. Well, if she resembles me that is different.

Mr. RATHBONE. Mrs. MacDowell, what I want to ask you is this. It seems an important inquiry: I understand you to say you were defrauded out of \$60,000. What I want to get at is whether you were defrauded through a medium, or whether it was done through spiritism, or whether it was a business transaction of a different character.

Mrs. MACDOWELL. It was done entirely through mediumship. The medium made these representations, advised Doctor Hubbell to bring this suit.

Mr. RATHBONE. Will you be good enough to show how that was done through mediumship? In other words, tell how you were caused to lose your \$60,000.

Mrs. MACDOWELL. Julia C. Warnicke acted as a medium for Dr. Julian B. Hubbell in securing this property. She advised him to bring this suit and said that it must be based on fictitious misrepresentation on my part and to get a lawyer of Rockville to bring the suit, and they won the same.

Their sworn legal statement which I will leave in the hands of the committee showing the execution of the deed by Dr. Julian B. Hubbell in the Washington Loan & Trust Co. and the cash consideration paid over to him for the same. Also the receipt of Doctor Hubbell in his own handwriting.

(The papers referred to by Mrs. MacDowell are as follows:)

PETITIONERS EXHIBIT A-46

STATE OF NEW YORK,

County of New York, ss:

I, Alfred B. Dent, of the city of New York, State of New York, residing at No. 54 West Seventy-first Street, in said city, being duly sworn according to law, depose and say that on the 14th day of May, 1914, I was a duly appointed

and qualified notary public in and for the District of Columbia, residing in the city of Washington, D. C., and exercising the duties of my office at the business place of the Washington Loan & Trust Co.; that on the date hereinbefore mentioned I was requested to take the acknowledgment of a deed in which one Julian B. Hubbell was party of the first part and Mabelle Rawson Hiron was party of the second part; that I witnessed the signature of said Julian B. Hubbell to said deed, and, at the request of Mrs. Hiron I procured the signature of one of the other employees of said the Washington Loan & Trust Co. as additional witness, notwithstanding my having informed Mrs. Hiron that my signature alone was legally sufficient for the purpose; that Mrs. Hiron, in the presence and hearing of the said Julian B. Hubbell volunteered the statement that she was about to pay over in cash \$11,000, the purchase price for property which she had purchased from the said Julian B. Hubbell, giving that as her reason for being particular as to having more than one witness; that said Hubbell did not deny that he was to receive said money covering said purchase, nor did he say anything indicating that her said statement as to the \$11,000 was incorrect or untrue; that the said Mrs. Hiron did at this time and in my presence hand over to said Hubbell a bulky legal-size envelope, in which I saw a considerable number of bank notes lying straight therein, and that he, the said Hubbell, accepted same; that all the time the said Hubbell accepted said envelope with said money therein I saw said Hubbell look inside of said envelope and then heard him say to Mrs. Hiron, "That is all right, Mrs. Hiron," whereupon she, in my hearing and presence, replied, "But you have not counted the money."

Both then crossed to the stand-up desk on the opposite side of the lobby, a distance of about 20 feet from my desk (and with nothing between the said stand-up desk and my desk to obstruct my view of them while they stood thereby), and I saw Doctor Hubbell counting the said money in the presence of Mrs. Hiron, who stood beside him at said stand-up desk. Mrs. Hiron had asked the said Hubbell to please give her a receipt for said sum of money, and he wrote out and handed to Mrs. Hiron two receipts, one for \$1,000 for the bill of sale of the personal property and one for \$10,000 to cover the real estate conveyed by the said deed, both of which receipts were shown to me when they, the said Mrs. Hiron and Hubbell, recrossed the lobby to my desk, and both were signed by "Julian B. Hubbell," being the same signature as was on the deed which had immediately theretofore been executed before me by said Hubbell; that before said Mrs. Hiron and Hubbell left my desk to cross to said stand-up desk said Mrs. Hiron, seeing a certain man walking in the lobby of the said trust company, said, "I think I know that gentleman," or words to that effect, pointing out the man whom I knew to be (the late) Judge Ashley M. Gould, and I told her who he was; that I knew the said Judge Gould well, he being a customer of the said trust company in which I was and for several years had been an employee; that the said Judge Gould came to the receiving teller's window within a few feet of my desk and on the same side of the said lobby, and, after remaining at the said receiving teller's window a short time he started diagonally across the lobby, ostensibly for the purpose of going out the doorway near and on the same side of said lobby as the said stand-up desk, said doorway leading into the main corridor, which corridor opened into F Street; that when he, the said Judge Gould, had covered about half the distance from the receiving teller's window to the said doorway leading into the said main corridor and was about midway between my desk and the said stand-up desk at which the said Mrs. Hiron and Hubbell were standing and counting the said money, the said Hubbell accosted the said Judge Gould and diverted him from his path toward the said doorway and took him, the said Judge Gould, over to said stand-up desk and presumably introduced him, the said Judge Gould, to the said Mrs. Hiron; that the said Mrs. Hiron, the said Hubbell, and the said Judge Gould, in my presence, though not in my hearing, then engaged in conversation for a few minutes, after which the said Judge Gould said good-by, or words to that effect, and continued on his way to the said doorway and went out into said main corridor; that immediately after the departure of the said Judge Gould the said Mrs. Hiron and said Hubbell came back over to my desk and exhibited to me the two receipts above mentioned, both of which I, in their presence, read over, which receipts showed payments made that day by Mrs. Hiron to said Hubbell of \$10,000 and \$1,000, covering the real estate conveyed by said deed and the personal property conveyed by said bill of sale, respectively. That said papers were executed before me just prior to my going to

lunch on the day in question, I having left my desk to go to lunch immediately after reading over said receipts, the time of my leaving being between 1 and 1.30 o'clock.

I further depose and say that about two years ago the said Hubbell interviewed me in the city of New York, seemingly for the purpose of getting my testimony in his case then pending against Mrs. Hirons for the return of the property conveyed by said deed and bill of sale, but after talking a considerable time with me about said case he abandoned said effort, and I heard nothing further from said Hubbell thereafter, except that he sent me certain data showing the nature of the said case.

I further depose and say that I never, after said visit to my office on the 14th day of May, 1914, saw or heard from, either directly or indirectly, except on her visit to Washington Loan & Trust Co. in relation to her checking account, and except, possibly some reference made by said Hubbell at his said visit of about two years ago, the said Mrs. Hirons, until on or about a day in September or October, 1925.

I further depose and say that I have no interest in the prosecution of this case.

ALFRED B. DENT.

Sworn to before me this 4th day of March, 1926.

JOHN M. MARTIN, *Notary Public*.

Term expires March 30, 1929.

PETITIONER'S EXHIBIT B

STATE OF NEW YORK,

County of New York:

Orlando B. Potter, being duly sworn, deposes and says that he is the president of the O. B. Potter Properties (Inc.) ; that Mr. Alfred B. Dent is employed by this company as bookkeeper and has been employed by the company since December, 1922. Before employing Mr. Dent deponent looked up his recommendations, all of which were very excellent, and deponent has found him to be a conscientious, trustworthy, and honorable person in all his dealings.

ORLANDO B. POTTER.

Sworn to before me this 5th day of May, 1926.

JAMES S. LAING, *Notary Public*.

My commission expires March 30, 1928.

PETITIONER'S EXHIBIT C

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS,

County of Suffolk, ss:

I, George Adams King, residing at 26 Dwight Street, Boston, Mass., being duly sworn, make affidavit as follows:

My father, Henry W. King, of the firm of Rice, King, & Rice, of Worcester, Mass., at his death in 1910 had in his possession and in his care certain personal property belonging to Mabelle Rawson Hirons, of Philadelphia, Pa. This property, at her request, I transferred to Mr. Charles L. Dundey, of Omaha, Nebr., some time in the year 1911. The amount of the property was some \$50,000.

GEORGE ADAMS KING.

Signed and sworn to before me this 3d day of March, 1926.

MARTHA STURN, *Notary Public*.

PETITIONER'S EXHIBIT D

DES MOINES, POLK COUNTY, IOWA, *March 22, 1926.*

I, Irma Vogel Townsend, depose and say that I was called to attend Mabelle Rawson Hirons on the morning of the day following Lillian Frantz's disappearance. On my arrival at her home in Glen Echo, Md., I was met at the

door by James A. McDowell, who took me immediately to the parlor, where I found Mrs. Hirons weeping bitterly, and she explained her grief was due to Lillian's having been stolen from her the previous day on her return from Rockville, and she had sent for me because she had cried all night, and was unable to regain control of her emotions.

As an osteopath and friend, I tried to comfort her, but realized I could not give her a regular treatment at that time. A stranger whom Mrs. Hirons called Mr. Smith came to make inquiries about Lillian's disappearance, and asked if the report which he had heard in the town about her disappearance was true. Mrs. Hirons replied that it was. He offered his sympathy and left. I did the same, and we left the house together.

I depose and say that Mrs. Hirons said nothing whatever about Clara Barton memorial in either of our presence.

She was filled with grief over the loss of Lillian Frantz, and this was her only thought at this time.

IRMA VOGEL TOWNSEND.

Subscribed, sworn to, and acknowledged before me this 22d day of March, 1926, by the subscriber, who is personally known to me.

JOSEPH W. CURPHY, *Notary Public*.

STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA,

County of Philadelphia, ss:

Charles F. Bryde, being duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is auditor and comptroller of Samuel T. Freeman & Co., auctioneers, Philadelphia, Pa., and that, under instructions from Mabelle Rawson Hirons, represented by Charles L. Dundey, attorney, said auctioneers sold at public auction at premises 2125 Green Street, on May 24, 1910, certain household furniture, which realized the sum of \$1,349.60, netting Mrs. Hirons the sum of \$1,167.14.

CHARLES F. BRYDE.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 4th day of March, 1926.

ELIZABETH M. J. CAMPBELL, *Notary Public*.

My commission expires May 15, 1927.

PETITIONER'S EXHIBIT E

STATE OF MISSOURI,

Kansas City, Jackson County, ss:

I, Charles L. Dundey, jr., of Kansas City, Mo., residing at 4426 Broadway, the son of the late Charles L. Dundey, attorney at law, of Omaha, in Douglas County, Nebr. Mr. Dundey was the attorney for Mrs. Mabelle Rawson Hirons, of Philadelphia, Pa.

I remember that during the month of May in the year 1914 my father, Charles L. Dundey, was called to New York to attend to some matters of business. On his return, which was about the middle of May of that year, he brought back to me several articles, amongst which was an Indian bow and arrow, which was given to him by the said Mrs. Hirons, to be presented to me. At the time of his return I was still confined to my bed following an accident which I had been in. This visit of my father to New York was very deeply impressed upon me, because of the pleasure which I received from the presentation of the above-mentioned articles.

After my father's death, June 25, 1920, my mother paid a visit to the home of Mrs. Hirons, in Glen Echo, Md., and upon her return packed up and returned to the said Mrs. Hirons all of the keepsakes and other things which could be found amongst the personal belongings of my father which he had had in his care and in his keeping.

My father's business relations were closed with the said Mrs. Hirons a year or so previous to his death, as his health would not permit him to continue to look after her affairs any longer.

The above statement is true.

CHARLES L. DUNDEY, JR.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 29th day of March, 1926.

RUA B. GOLDEN,

Notary Public in and for Jackson County, State of Missouri.

My commission expires April 27, 1929.

PETITIONER'S EXHIBIT F

CITY OF WASHINGTON,

District of Columbia, ss:

I, Elliot H. Thomson, 900 F Street NW., Washington, D. C., depose and state that on the 14th day of May, 1914, Julian B. Hubbell and Mabelle Rawson Hirons were in the Washington Loan & Trust Co., 900 F Street NW., Washington, D. C., and Julian B. Hubbell had acknowledged a deed of conveyance of properties at Glen Echo, Md., to Mabelle Rawson Hirons and he had acknowledged the same in the presence of Alfred B. Dent, notary public. Mabelle Rawson Hirons then refused to accept said deed because she stated that she was paying cash for the property and she desired to have plenty of witnesses to the same, and I was asked by Mr. Dent to please witness the deed, although we both assured Mabelle Rawson Hirons that this procedure was unnecessary, and I did witness said deed which conveyed to Mabelle Rawson Hirons the real estate holdings of Julian B. Hubbell in Glen Echo, Md.

ELIOT H. THOMSON,

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 14th day of April, 1926.

HERBERT A. POOLE, *Notary Public*.

Two changes made by E. H. Thomson in my presence.

HERBERT A. POOLE, *Notary Public*.

COUNTY OF _____,

State of Maryland, to wit:

I, Margaret C. Kroll Tibbitts, being first duly sworn, on oath depose and say that in the case of Dr. Julian B. Hubbel, plaintiff, v. Mrs. Mable Rawson Hirons, defendant, now before the Circuit Court of Montgomery County, Md., this case was brought to my attention by Judge Ashley M. Gould, former associate justice of the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia, when I was his secretary, in which capacity I acted until his death in May, 1921. He discussed with me on several occasions some of the facts of the case, thereby informing me of the circumstances surrounding the matters in which he was involved; that he stated that he knew personally that Mrs. Hirons had paid Doctor Hubbel for the property in question, as he was present in the Washington Loan & Trust Co. of Washington, D. C., when the money passed. He also told me that afterwards he introduced Mrs. Hirons to Mr. Arthur Peter by letter, asking him to represent her in the case known, I believe, as the water bonds case against the town of Glen Echo. I understand that Mr. Peter thereafter had this matter placed in the hands of his assistant, Mr. Julien Whiting.

During the discussion of the case I remember distinctly Judge Gould remarking that Doctor Hubbel certainly must be of unsound mind to bring such a suit against Mrs. Hirons, as there was nothing in the transactions between them to warrant it.

Judge Gould was anxious for the case to come up before he left on his vacation in 1921, as he intended to be a witness for Mrs. Hirons.

MARGARET KROLL TIBBITTS.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 27th day of February, A. D. 1926.

ALBANY D. GRUBE, *Notary Public*.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

Mr. HARRY KARR,

Baltimore, Md.

MY DEAR MR. KARR: In reply to your request, it gives me pleasure to respond that I will be glad to assist Mrs. McDowell.

I distinctly remember that Judge Gould was to have been a witness for her, and that he stated that he had been present at the time when Mrs. Hyrons paid Doctor Hubbell and received the deed for the property, and later introduced her by letter to Mr. Arthur Peter, asking him to assist Mrs. Hyrons in recovering the water bonds.

I wrote a letter to judges of the circuit court at Rockville, a copy of which you have probably seen, and which explains my knowledge of the affair.

Very truly yours,

MARGARET K. TIBBITTS
(Nee MARGARET C. KROLL)

MUNICIPAL COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
June 20, 1922.

The HONORABLE JUDGES CIRCUIT COURT OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY,
Rockville, Md.

GENTLEMEN: In re the case of Dr. Julian B. Hubbell, plaintiff, *v.* Mrs. Mabel Rawson Hyrons, defendant, now before you, I beg to state that this case was brought to my attention by Judge Ashley M. Gould, former associate justice of the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia, when I was his secretary, in which capacity I acted until his death in May, last year. He discussed with me on several occasions some of the facts of the case, thereby informing me of the circumstances surrounding the matters in which he was involved.

He stated that he knew, personally, that Mrs. Hyrons had paid Doctor Hubbell for the property in question, as he was present in the Washington Loan & Trust Co. of this city when the money passed. He also told me that afterwards he introduced Mrs. Hyrons to Mr. Arthur Peter, by letter, asking him to represent her in the case known, I believe, as the water bonds case against the town of Glen Echo. I understand that Mr. Peter thereafter had this matter placed in the hands of his assistant, Mr. Julian Whiting.

During the discussion of the case, I remember distinctly Judge Gould remarking that Doctor Hubbell certainly must be of unsound mind to bring such a suit against Mrs. Hyrons, as there was nothing in the transactions between them to warrant it.

Judge Gould was anxious for the case to come up before he left on his vacation last year, as he intended to be a witness for Mrs. Hyrons.

If it is necessary for me to give any further information in this case, I will be glad to be called upon to tell anything within my knowledge, in order that Mrs. Hyrons's rights be maintained.

Very respectfully,

MARGARET C. KBOLL.

GLEN ECHO, MD., May 14, 1914.

Received of Mrs. Mabelle R. Hyrons the sum of ten thousand (10,000) dollars in payment for my deed to her for Glen Echo properties and water bonds.

J. B. HUBBELL.

[Confidential]

DEAR FRIEND: I don't know how to begin, because I do not want to be misunderstood, and I do not want the Glen Echo people to know how pressed I am for means to meet the demands that are one me and are still to come.

I did not pay my taxes to the town last year and had to meet it this year. The two years together for the town were \$800, or, to be exact, \$793.30, besides 70 feet of concrete walk I had to build at a cost of \$33.25.

Then the State and county tax for this year alone was \$256. Only four houses are, or have been, bringing rent this winter. The rent of the town hall is also cut off.

There is, besides the taxes, interest and insurance on each of the houses to keep up. For example, yearly insurance on town hall, \$18; interest on town hall, \$72+\$18=\$90; in all, \$108, that has to be paid in cash annually. This practically represents each of the other houses, except the Herin home and the Weaver place.

So I have had to borrow \$1,000 to meet these bills, and when they are paid there is nothing to show for it—left only to do the same thing next year.

There is no market for sale of property now. The Moran place is offered, and has been for a year, for \$1,500. The Shaw (unfinished) home for \$600. No one will buy.

So tell me what am I to do?

Spring is the only time one can rent houses in Glen Echo.

I had thought Mr. Many might come out again, but it does not look so now.

When you spoke of going into the city last fall you know I did not encourage it, or did not say anything, perhaps, because I did not feel there would be anyone wanting the house for the winter, and you might as well have it as to leave it empty and save so much expense.

But, now, when I think of your effort for "Nita" I know it is coming time that she should have the regular drill and practice under direction that will keep her at it if she succeeds in her expectations.

This she will not get here in Glen Echo (except at great expense), and even then it would not be practical.

With this in view (even if no other), should she not be placed where she could get this preparation for her work?

I know that it is not an easy problem to solve, and I will be glad if I can help, if I know how.

Please say nothing about my financial pressure—besides the taxes, the interest account I have not figured up—but you can imagine what it is.

Truly and sincerely,

J. B. H.

I trust all will turn out for the best.

Mr. HOUDINI. I know Mrs. Fletcher is sincere, but anybody can write on slates, do slate writing. She says they can not, but I know they can do it. I say that no human being possesses mediumistic powers [hisses]; we are all born alike.

Mr. RATHBONE. Mr. Chairman, I think we ought to have respect shown to everybody here. The audiences ought not to be permitted to make demonstrations one way or the other while witnesses are testifying.

Mr. HOUDINI. Every medium that uses a trumpet to get voices is a fraud, and every medium who performs similar things, like slate writing, and getting a message which he reads from the slates is a fraud. I will duplicate any slate test performed by any slate-writing medium in the world. You have probably heard of the great slate writer, Keeler. I have an admission from him after I caught him in Lily Dale; he admitted it was a fake, saying: "Houdini, let me down easy." He says, "We are both in the same business." I say no medium can intercommunicate with the dead.

I would like to tell Mrs. Fletcher that Mr. Bradley's book is a fake. The details of Valentine's workings were exposed in the Scientific American, and I was on the committee that was instrumental in exposing Mr. Valentine. Mr. Valentine in the investigation threw himself on the mercy of the committee. I am willing to prove to this committee those facts. Mr. Valentine has been branded by the committee of the Scientific American as an unscientific liar.

Regarding lost and stolen articles. I am surprised that the police departments of the other different cities do not engage mediums to help them to find lost and stolen articles instead of having large forces of detectives and police to do this work.

It has been said that there are no rich mediums. Take the case of John Slater. He is worth more than a million dollars. I do not want to go into details, but there are many more. They start off with 50 cents and go up to any amount.

Regarding Mrs. Benninghofen, I wish to state that Mr. Strack, or Doctor Strack, has maliciously misrepresented. I have here the affidavits of Mr. Benninghofen and Mrs. Benninghofen that I wish to put into the record, in which Mrs. Benninghofen states that before she met me two years ago her mother had asked her to give up the trumpet. And, two years after her mother passed away, it preyed on her mind until she finally gave it up. She is a minister of your organization, and I have the certificate of ordination. She gave up giving trumpet exhibitions two years ago. She is an ordained min-

ister of your association. I wish to state that while it is true that in their constitution and by-laws they stipulate these things that were spoken of, it is like everything else of that kind—they put the bars down.

(The affidavits of Mr. and Mrs. Benninghofen are as follows:)

When I was first elected to the State office of the second vice president of the Indiana State Association of Spiritualists, I had several talks with Mr. Endor and Mr. John Slater. Slater and myself rode in adjoining seats from Kokoma, Ind., to Anderson, Ind., and we talked all the way together. He went on to Richmond, and from there took a train to the East, to Lily Dale, N. Y.

Mr. Endor works out in the audience; in fact, he is an all-around handy man and waits on John Slater. In reality he gets the information and gives it to Slater.

I said to Mr. Endor, "You have it pretty well fixed"; to which he replied, "Yes, sir; I have them all fixed; if it was not for me Slater would not be able to give them the information, and you know that as well as I do." He told me this several times, and I told him I knew it was all a trick.

As mentioned above, John Slater and myself were sitting in adjoining seats; and he told me he was bound for Lily Dale, going by the way of Anderson, on the Pennsylvania Railroad. I got off at Anderson, Ind., which is my home.

However, while on the train Slater talked to me all the time, and he said he was from California; he asked me a great many questions. I said to him, "Well, you are pretty good"; to which he replied, "Yes; I have the best trick of them all. I would not work in the Chesterfield camp, because they are all independents, and I belong to the National Spiritualists' Association the same as Mrs. Benninghofen."

My terms of office are as follows: 1919 and 1920, second vice president, at Kokoma, Ind.; 1920 and 1921, first vice president, at Indianapolis, Ind.; 1921 and 1922, president, at New Castle, Ind.

Slater at no time tried to tell me he had invoked the spirits and said it was all trickery.

It was the happiest moment of my life when Mrs. Benninghofen quit the trumpet seances, which I believe was the first Sunday in September, 1924.

ERNEST BENNINGHOFER.

STATE OF ILLINOIS,

County of Cook, City of Chicago, ss:

Before me, a notary public in and for said county, personally appears Ernest Benninghofer, who takes oath that the above is true to his knowledge and belief.

Sworn to before me this 12th day of April, 1926.

[SEAL.]

MAUDE L. BONSON, *Notary Public.*

I, the undersigned, being duly sworn, wish to state, of my own free will and accord, and that long before I ever heard of Houdini I had reformed and stopped doing my trumpet seances.

The actual facts of my having reformed were: My mother for years asked me to stop. Knowing I could mystify, I declined to do so, as the work held a tenseness for me. The shrewdest people in the country came to me for readings—bankers, lawyers, judges, chiefs of police; in fact the highest type of people believe me genuine.

Knowing my work to be trickery, my dear mother on her deathbed begged me to give up the work. After she had passed away it preyed on my mind, so that for more than two years I did not have any peace until one night I said, "This is my last seance."

When I heard of the work that Houdini was doing I came to Chicago of my own free will and accord without any thought of compensation or offer being made to compensate me in any way. I am simply trying to make amends and will do so all the rest of my life, despite the fact that I have been threatened time and time again that my life would be in danger if I did not stop; nevertheless I shall keep on making amends.

I started in thinking the work I was doing was true, and as I had been tested under test conditions by the searchers and the heads of the spiritualists' organizations and easily mystified them I was to all intents genuine.

It is also true that I taught Mrs. Cecil Cook all the tricks I knew; in fact twenty some odd years ago I sold her my flat on the north side when I resided in Chicago and she took over my clients. I am not proud of this; it is hard to humiliate myself, but better the world know the truth.

I think Houdini is one of the great men of our time, and I make this announcement everywhere I go. I want all upright living people to know I am honest and that everything I can do to help wipe the slate of my past I will willing do so.

It has been stated that I have developed and produced at one seance three or four voices; that is easily accomplished by a manipulation of the horn, placing it to and from the mouth, and at almost every circle someone there will help, doing it in place of the silent worker who may have been prepared for the occasion. It has been the case that although I do not speak any language except English, but by simply imitating the French or German languages, I convinced the faithful they had received messages.

In one instance I had a two-hour seance with a French lady who could not speak English and she went away delighted.

It is equally true that I have given dark seances and several times I have been given statements that the trumpet moved around in the light which was not the case; it is just a circumstance of the happening.

It was not my custom to keep a blue book regarding information of the people who came to me for seances, but I have handled blue books and know positively that they do exist, as I have memorized information therefrom.

If there is anything I can do to make up for the past (as I was never so happy as the day I stopped being a trumpet medium) I will gladly do it.

ANNIE M. BENNINGHOFFEN.

STATE OF ILLINOIS,

County of Cook, city of Chicago, ss:

Before me, a notary public in and for said county, personally appeared Mrs. Anna Clark Benninghofen, who takes oath that the above is true to her knowledge and belief.

Sworn to before me this 17th day of April, 1926.

MAUDE L. BONSON, *Notary Public.*

MY DEAR MR. HOUDINI: I herewith give you the trumpet that I used in my seances. It is the same one that I would use in the churches and place on the altar, and through which I would force my voice and cause the believers to think it was the voice of their beloved dead speaking to them.

I was capable of sitting at least six feet from the open mouth of the trumpet, which is the large end, and causing voices to be heard. I present this trumpet to you, as I have no further use for same and will also send you my certificate of ordination given to me by the National Spiritualist Association.

You may not know it, but I am called "the mother medium," having been so many years a trumpet medium, and your question made me smile the other night when you asked me in front of the audience if I would refute my confession or recant, as is supposed to have been done by the Fox sisters.

As I told you and I tell you now, that if I stuck to spiritualism, knowing it was a fraud, I certainly will stick to the truth now. Recantation is impossible, inasmuch as I do want to clean up the slate and regret having taught the tricks to the other mediums.

I will come any time or place to your assistance to help you, as I now see the great good that is being done. You know when I reformed I had no intentions of going before the public and showing the tricks were done; it was my desire to retire in private life, but when I saw the effect it had on the public I did think it advisable to show them just exactly how I did my work.

You have asked me repeatedly if I was ever exposed or detected in my work; no, not to my knowledge and if anyone ever did suspect me they never told me so, and I have had hundreds of intelligent and intellectual men and women positively recognize my voice as the voice of their beloved dead. I have told my believers things that they knew I could not have known, which was just deduction and guess work, but you never hear of the many things I told my clients that never did happen. Many strange things did come true and out of the hundreds of things that I surmised, deduced, or heard which gave me leads I can truthfully say now it was just chance.

ANNA CLARK BENNINGHOFFEN.

STATE OF ILLINOIS,

County of Cook, city of Chicago, ss:

Before me, a notary public in and for said county, personally appeared Mrs. Anna Clark Benninghofen, who takes oath that the above is true to her knowledge and belief.

Sworn to before me this 27th day of April, 1926.

[SEAL.]

MAUDE L. BONSON, Notary Public.

Mr. HOUDINI. I wish to state that they do sell charms. I bought these here in Washington through my investigator [placing a bundle of envelopes on the table]. Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee, Doctor Strack is not telling you the truth, and he knows he is not telling the truth on this—

Mr. HAMMER. That is improper language for you to use.

Mr. STRACK. I want to ask Mr. Houdini where he bought these. There are only five mediums in this city affiliated with our association.

Mr. HOUDINI. You called me an atheist, and that I did not believe in—

Mr. STRACK. You said yesterday you had no religion.

Mr. HOUDINI. That is not true. And mediums do take money.

Mr. STRACK. You can not prove it—

Mr. HOUDINI (interposing). I have a statement here, a sworn statement here from one of my investigators, showing where your wife took my money, took my money, took it from one of my investigators. I wish to incorporate that into the record.

(The statement referred to above is as follows:)

WASHINGTON, D. C., January 7, 1926.

Strack, Mrs. Ida N., N. S. A., 600 Pennsylvania Avenue SE.

6.45—7.00 p. m.—This is a red-brick house located on the corner. Upon ringing the basement bell some woman answered and then called Mrs. Strack, who stated that she had a meeting that evening but would have time to give me a reading. She asked me to walk up stairs, and opened the door for me; asked me to wait in a sitting room, which was furnished with a number of wall book-cases. An ordination from the National Spiritualists' Association was framed and stood at the mantelpiece. It was to the effect that the ordination of Mrs. Ida Strack was in force since 1915, but a new paper had been granted her recently.

Oil paintings of the Fox sisters hung on the wall; also a portrait of Myler, who donated that property to the association.

Mrs. Strack came in, sat down opposite me, and closed her eyes, put her hand to her head, and began by saying: "You are worried about some one who is away." I said, "Yes; my husband." She continued: "He is with his people somewhere in Pennsylvania or Ohio, and with another woman; I get that very plainly. But he won't come back; he has gone for good."

Asked about my sister. She informed me, "Your sister died in childbirth; I see that very plainly. The child is with her. Your husband has been gone about three months, hasn't he? He is sick at the present time." I asked how did she know that, and she replied, "They show that to me." I asked, "Who does?" She stated, "Why, the spirits; they are right here. You have seven spirits around you now. I can count them. They are all very happy and do not want you to worry. You had a little girl that died from some condition of the throat." I said, "Yes; diphtheria." "Yes; that is what I get," and she says, "She is much happier than on earth; she would not come back now for anything. She hopes that you understand. They tell me that if you would sit in the silence they would come through to you. They do not want you to worry."

Stated that she is conducting a meeting at her home this evening, but on Sunday they hold church services in some hall.

She is a woman about 45 years of age; stout; blond; pleasant face.

Marked the ordination in the back with a crayon pencil; also door.

Paid her dollar bill with serial number T5957931B upon being advised that was her fee.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *Friday, January 8, 1926.*

Strack, National Spiritualist Association, Unity Spiritualist Church, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE.

As per instructions, accompanied by Mrs. Regney, of 1301 Massachusetts Avenue NW., Apartment 512, called at the above address at about 11.45 a. m. and was informed by Mr. Strack that Mrs. Strack was down town, shopping with one of her daughters, and he expected her back shortly and asked us to wait. After waiting about ten minutes one of the girls, who is about 15 years of age, came in with a number of bundles and, upon being asked by Mr. Strack where her mother was, stated that she had several readings for 2 p. m. and would not return before that time.

We left at that time, stating we would be in touch with her again.

At about 1.10 p. m. I phoned through to Mr. Strack and he informed me that his wife was expected home at about 2.15 p. m., so I again communicated with Mrs. Regney and we proceeded here and were admitted by Mr. Strack. While waiting, the phone rang and he answered it; he returned about five minutes later and stated he had just spoken to Mrs. Strack; that she had gone to a hospital with a friend of hers and would not return until about 4 p. m.

However, we spoke about spiritualism in general for about 10 minutes, and he informed us that they were the headquarters for the United States; that the property had been left to them by one of their trustees, C. L. Myler. In order to enter the N. S. A. one must be in the work for two years; must pass a test before the directors. Must stand a moral investigation.

That they have a wonderful place in Lily Dale where all the spiritualists meet during the summer months. Handed us two copies of the by-laws of the association; also a pamphlet of Lily Dale.

Strack is described as being about 50 years of age, blond hair tinged with gray; rather stout; good talker.

He said he had been in this work since he was in his teens; that he is not a medium, but just does the inspirational lectures.

We left here at about 2 p. m.

ROSE MACKENBERG.

STATE OF NEW YORK,

County of New York, city of New York, ss:

Before me, a notary public in and for said county, personally appeared Rose Mackenberg, who takes oath that the above is true to her knowledge and belief.

Sworn to before me this 12th day of January, 1926.

[SEAL.]

WILLIAM ATKINS,

Notary Public, New York County.

Mr. HOUDINI. Now, again I say, Mr. Chairman, I am not fighting religion. What I am aiming to do is to fight fraud and fraudulent practices.

I have no quarrel with those who believe in that kind of phenomena; but, Mr. Chairman, a lot of the people believe that the world is flat. However, that does not make it flat.

I can go to the insane asylum and see lots of people who see forms and hear voices. But that does not mean that those forms actually exist or that they actually hear them.

I am spokesman for a fund of \$50,000 for proof of those phenomena. The Journal of Abnormal Psychology selected professors of Harvard University and chose me to be on the committee. Do you think those men were fools when they selected me on that committee? They did not select me for any intellectual attainments. They know that if in a seance any ectoplasm appears that I will grab it and have it analyzed.

It is not unusual for mediums to fool people. Sir William Crooks was fooled by a little blonde medium, and Robert Dale Owen went to the insane asylum as the result of their advice. I have here a book

filled with crimes by mediums. I wish it to be placed with the record and filed with the committee. But, Mr. Chairman, I am not against the religion.

Mr. RATHBONE. I make the point of order that the House has called a session.

The CHAIRMAN. A point of order has been raised.

Mr. HAMMER. When can we have another meeting?

The CHAIRMAN. A point of order has been raised. Do you insist upon your point of order?

Mr. RATHBONE. I think if it is important to have another hearing that we ought to have another hearing to give the rest of the witnesses a chance to testify, but I do not think with this most important farm legislation under consideration we have a right to violate the rules of the House.

The CHAIRMAN. It has been suggested to have a meeting to-night.

Mr. HAMMER. I move that we meet to-night at 8 o'clock and that we equalize the time and agree upon it. And that we let Madam Garcia be heard.

Mr. HOUDINI. I have come here all the way from Chicago, and I have brought my staff from Chicago. I am under enormous expense in coming here, but that is all right. I have been offered engagements but I have positively refused them. I am sincere in my belief that this is the psychological time for a bill to be put through. If I am endowed in any way with ability to detect the practices of fraudulent mediums, I believe I ought to do my duty as a citizen of the United States of America.

The CHAIRMAN. The committee will stand adjourned until 8 o'clock to-night, to meet in the caucus room.

(The balance of the papers and envelopes submitted by Mr. Houdini are hereto attached.)

(Thereupon, at 12 o'clock m., the committee adjourned to meet at 8 o'clock p. m. of the same day.)

EVENING SESSION

The subcommittee met at 8 o'clock p. m., Hon. Clarence J. McLeod (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. McLEOD. The committee will now consider H. R. 8989, which amends chapter 5 of the Code of Laws of the District of Columbia, as amended to June 7, 1924, relating to offenses against public policy.

Mr. RATHBONE. Have you concluded your case for the proponents?

STATEMENT OF HARRY HOUDINI—Resumed

Mr. HOUDINI. No; with permission, I have further evidence to submit.

Mr. RATHBONE. How many more witnesses have you got?

Mr. HOUDINI. Well, I have some very important rebuttal evidence, if I may be permitted to show it, when they get through.

Mr. RATHBONE. For myself, I think we ought to follow the general rule of the introduction of evidence, and that is that it is not fair to hold back your testimony, which would ordinarily form part of your original case, for rebuttal. I think you ought to put in your

whole case, to begin with, and then introduce rebuttal testimony simply for the purpose of replying to any matter that the other side brings up. So, if you have any other witnesses bearing upon the subject, I think you ought to bring them forward now.

Mr. HOUSTON. In other words, Mr. Houdini, you will not be allowed to put in any new matter in rebuttal. So if you have any other new matter which you desire to produce, you better do it now.

Mr. HOUDINI. Mr. Chairman, ladies, and gentlemen, I have here, without reading, a letter from the Washington Federation of Churches, which I will hand to the stenographer for insertion in the record, if I can find it.

Mr. HOUSTON. Why wait until you find it? When you do find it you can turn it over to the committee and the committee will pass upon it and determine whether they want to insert it in the record. That method will save time.

Mr. HOUDINI. The Washington Federation of Churches are in favor of the bill. May I read the letter?

Mr. McLEOD. You may read it.

Mr. HOUDINI (reading):

THE WASHINGTON FEDERATION OF CHURCHES,
Washington, D. C., January 22, 1926.

Mr. HARRY HOUDINI,
Belasco Theater, Washington, D. C.

MY DEAR MR. HOUDINI: On behalf of the ministers of Washington, let me thank you for your courtesy in addressing them on Tuesday afternoon of this week. The attendance was over 200 men and women, which was evidence of the interest which our invitation had aroused. Your presentation of the question was such as to make a strong appeal to all who were present.

Our city has had too large a number of frauds for its own good, physical and financial, to say nothing of spiritual. I believe that your presence and exposure of the matter will enable us to secure such a law as the Capital of the Nation should have.

Please accept my personal gratitude for your kindness, and be assured that Washington pastors will not soon forget the impression which you brought to them so forcefully and helpfully.

Very truly yours,

W. L. DARBY, *Executive Secretary.*

I also wish to place in the record a report of the medium with whom Madame Marcia was connected 20 years ago. I do not want to read this. It is all about Mrs. May Piper Vanderbilt, such a character that I would rather commend it to you to read.

Mr. McLEOD. What does it pertain to?

Mr. HOUDINI. It says that the association with whom Mrs. Marcia worked with at that time in her mediumship days—

Mr. McLEOD. What would that have to do with this bill?

Mr. HOUDINI. It would show the people who are using the law of this town that the chief of police—the law states it distinctly and I have it over there—

Mr. RATHBONE. I am not concerned with the present law, except that it has a bearing upon this proposed bill, and I think the purpose of this is to go into the character of the people. I do not think that has anything to do with our inquiry. I do not think this committee can take the time to go into people's personal record or character.

Mr. McLEOD. Mrs. Marcia is just one medium here in the District of Columbia?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes; but I want you to read it.

Mr. HAMMER. I do not suppose that we accept it with any understanding that we are to print it. The witness can leave it to us with that understanding.

Mr. HOUDINI. No examination is made of the medium's ability to do anything. That is the law at the present time.

Here is a sworn affidavit regarding the visit of Rev. Rose Meckenberg, Mrs. Jane B. Coates—it is sworn to—where she makes the statement positively that Mrs. Coates described the visits at the White House.

Mr. HAMMER. Who is the Rev. Rose Meckenberg? Is that your investigator who has been ordained as a spiritualist preacher?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes.

Mr. HAMMER. Mrs. Coates is the lady who interviewed the President?

Mr. HOUDINI. She so said. I do not say she did.

Mr. McLEOD. This is the same matter we had in the record last meeting?

Mr. HOUDINI. No.

Mr. McLEOD. Is not this the statement made at the other meeting?

Mr. HOUDINI. No; this is sworn to.

Mr. HAMMER. We do not want anything in the record until we know what it is.

Mr. RATHBONE. You claim this is important in the matter not brought out in the testimony of the witness; is that right?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes. May I explain why? I have there a letter from President Lincoln's son. The spiritualists claim that President Lincoln was a spiritualist. That is not true. I would like to put that in the record.

Mr. HAMMER. What difference does it make whether he was or not?

Mr. HOUDINI. I will explain.

Mr. HAMMER. I did not mean to be adverse to you.

Mr. HOUDINI. No; because by using the President's name the mediums get a great advertisement, like going to the queen. May I put it in the record where he denies their claims that he was a spiritualist?

Mr. HAMMER. I move, Mr. Chairman, that Mr. Houdini submit such as he sees proper, and then the chairman and the committee can investigate and publish such parts as we deem essential. Otherwise it will be a voluminous record, and some of it is not material.

Mr. HOUDINI. This Abraham Lincoln letter is important, because they get hundreds of converts by bringing back the spirit of Abraham Lincoln. I know that the spirit of Abraham Lincoln has been in four seances in the same room at the same time.

Mr. HAMMER. How are we going to remedy it?

Mr. HOUDINI. By not giving such an open license; by stopping the doing of those things which the law now allows. That is pretending they can throw their astral body into the past and future and give you all inside information.

Mr. McLEOD. You say they believe it, and they dissolve their body out of certain matters?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes.

Mr. McLEOD. They believe that and they believe this? Then how would you discourage it?

Mr. HOUDINI. By not having them to rob.

Mr. McLEOD. You charge that they rob?

Mr. HOUDINI. When you go to them, they tell you they see forms and hear voices—that's the time they rob.

Mr. McLEOD. Several mediums have testified that they believed you are a clairvoyant. You told us that yourself.

Mr. HOUDINI. That is a fact; they all say so. It is not true, but simply deductive.

Here is my investigator's report on Madame Marcia.

Mr. HAMMER. Who is Madame Marcia?

Mr. HOUDINI. The lady medium, the well-known astrologist. [Laughter.] I have this sworn to. She makes claims to mediumistic powers and to being an astrologist, making use of both of them.

Mr. McLEOD. All right; that will be received along with the Coates affidavit.

Mr. RATHBONE. What else have you to offer?

Mr. HOUDINI. Here is what I would like to say: There are trumpet mediums in town, and there is no doubt about it that they are frauds. They are permitted to practice under this law. I notice that it is contended that Mrs. Fletcher is quoted as saying that the medium floated a trumpet over the head of 18 people.

I wish to say, gentlemen, in conclusion, that I have here \$10,000 [producing a package of currency].

Mr. RATHBONE. Be a little careful the way you throw that money around, because I am pretty near to it.

Mr. HOUDINI. I defy any medium here—they are all mediums, and I have very few friends among them—and I will pay that \$10,000, and I defy every medium in the room to do a physical manifestation now that I can not prove is a fraud and I can show is a fraud. There [referring to currency on committee table] are \$10,000, and I will leave it to you gentlemen to judge whether I can expose them or not. This is my answer to anything they say. If they can, here is the money; and the money is good. The manager of the Merchants Bank is present, and he will vouch for the genuineness of this money. [Applause.]

Mrs. MARCIA. That money belongs to me. I challenged him in the theater to disprove the prediction I made of Warren G. Harding, which he never accepted. So that \$10,000 belongs to me. [Applause.]

Mr. HOUDINI. You proved—

Mr. RATHBONE. While the matter is in dispute I will hold the \$10,000 until it is settled.

Mr. HOUDINI. All right. You proved it to President Harding, who was a kindly human being who knew nothing about subterfuge and trickery. Prove it to me, and the money is yours. [Applause.]

Mrs. MARCIA. He is in error. I did not prove it to Mr. Harding. I never had an interview with Mr. Harding. I have been misquoted in the press within the last few days, saying I gave the name of my client, Senator Dill. I wish to be corrected. Although Sena-

tor Dill has acknowledged he visited me 10 years ago, if he was present I would ask him did he ever——

Mr. RATHBONE. You will be given an opportunity in regular order.

Mr. McLEOD. Let us proceed in regular order.

Mr. HAMMER. The author of the bill, Mr. Bloom, is present. Let us find a seat for him.

Mr. HOUDINI. You did give Mrs. Harding astrological readings, did you not? You did that, Madam Marcia; you said you did not give any of the newspapers interviews, but you did give the newspapers an interview about Mrs. Harding. Gentlemen, she is tricky with it. She gave Mrs. Harding an astrological reading. Here it is in writing. This is the challenge I have had for years, and here I amend my challenge.

Mr. McLEOD. In what way?

Mr. HOUDINI. Where I want the mediums to give me a physical test, and you gentlemen to be the judge whether I can not expose them. I will guarantee to expose any physical phenomena of any medium in the world.

Mr. RATHBONE. Mr. Houdini, just a question or two, if you please. The question about Abraham Lincoln and his beliefs is brought up. I do not think it is material to the bill, but you say you have investigated it and you know he was not a spiritualist.

Mr. HOUDINI. His son says so. I will read it if you wish. It is written to me and dated September 28, 1925. The importance of that is that they always use a great man's name to get converts.

Mr. RATHBONE. I think you will all agree who know about Abraham Lincoln that he was not a spiritualist as spiritualism is understood. Abraham Lincoln, if the authorities are correct at all, did believe and seek a number of times in his life, and spoke on the morning of his last day, of having a premonition of coming death. Is it your understanding that that has any relation to spiritualism?

Mr. HOUDINI. I believe in premonition, absolutely, but not in spiritualism.

Mr. McLEOD. What is a premonition?

Mr. HOUDINI. A premonition is—for example, suppose a mother is worried about her child, and she thinks that child will be crushed under an automobile. Thousands of mothers have the same premonition. Unfortunately it does happen, though it does not always happen. I have had a premonition of things that happened. If you have those often enough accidents take place sometimes.

I believe in all those things. I believe in the subconscious mind, in the hereafter, in Almighty God, but I do not believe that the disembodied spirit can come back and do the things that the mediums claim they can do.

I have no quarrel with religion. Please bear that in mind. I have no malice against any mediums. They say I am quarreling with their religion, but that is their smoke screen. In their constitutions which I have here they claim you can become a medium, and all you have to do is that you must hear voices and see forms. That is what you must do. You must be a year in the church or two years. You need no vocation whatsoever, and they do get fortunes; for example, the Clara Barton case in Washington, \$70,000. Luther Marsh gave

away two and a half million dollars. They start in with nothing, and then instead of charging they get presents just the same as D. D. Holmes got \$300,000 from a widow. The money they charge means nothing; it is only the opening wedge to get fortunes, to get hold of some old man or lady and bring back the beloved dead; and the widows are informed. The mediums call them on the phone, saying, "We have a message from your husband."

In the case of Mr. Cox, of Cincinnati, after he passed away his widow was informed by one of the spiritualists in seances that her husband wanted to speak to her. That is how they get their trade. I want to go on record that millions of these are taken in the various camps—Lily Dale, Clinton, Iowa, Onset Bay, Anderson Casadaga, and all through California. The laws of California are getting stricter. They just sent to jail A. M. Thompson. He received \$500 fine and 60 days in jail. His wife received \$500 fine and suspended sentence, and his daughter received \$500 fine and suspended sentence.

Mr. BLOOM. For what? What did they get that for?

Mr. HOUDINI. For fraudulently obtaining money and pretending that the spirits came back.

Mr. HOUSTON. Is that prosecution under a special statute or general statute of fraud?

Mr. BLOOM. I have the laws of California.

Mr. HAMMER. May I ask you a question right there, please? Under the law here we have a very slight requirement. The requirements are only \$25 license for fortune tellers. You do not understand that that licenses them to commit fraud?

Mr. HOUDINI. I know it does.

Mr. HAMMER. You do not mean to say that any license carries with it the authority to violate the law of the land?

Mr. HOUDINI. That is why you must have a new law.

Mr. HAMMER. Let us see a minute. Do not the regulations require them to get letters from 10 reputable persons as to the character of the applicant?

Mr. HOUDINI. The getting of those letters is the easiest thing in the world.

Mr. HAMMER. Is it not the duty of the police and are they not to blame for not investigating and seeing whether these letters—

Mr. BLOOM. I just want to get Mr. Hammer right. That is in reference to fortune telling. In reference to spiritualism there is no requirement. Do not confuse now the fortune telling with the religion.

Mr. HAMMER. Another thing right there I want to ask you is: This bill which Mr. Bloom has introduced prohibits sleight-of-hand performances. Maybe I do not know what sleight of hand is.

Mr. HOUDINI. That applies when the medium asks you to write messages and by sleight of hand changes the messages, enabling him to exchange the real ones for blank sheets of paper, which you think are your own messages, by subterfuge he reads the contents of your notes, pretending to read messages from your dead mother, school teacher, etc. There are quite a number.

Mr. HAMMER. Your work is sleight of hand. You do not claim any divine power?

Mr. HOUDINI. No; I am just an ordinary mortal trying to get along.

Mr. HAMMER. You do not do this by any divine or religious power?

Mr. HOUDINI. No. You see, Mr. Hammer, there is nothing wrong about that.

Mr. HAMMER. I think you admit you are a fraud? [Laughter.]

Mr. HOUDINI. I will give you a spiritualist message, if you wish me to.

Mr. HAMMER. I think it would be very helpful in showing the folly of these divine inspirations that control and dominate these others; and Mr. Houdini claims he has no divine power. It is not for the purpose of having some levity.

Mr. HOUDINI. All right; I will give you the spiritualist exhibition.

Mr. BLOOM. Let me suggest that if Mr. Houdini wants to give the committee a demonstration in small slate writing that he should have an opportunity to do so.

Mr. McLEOD. If there is no objection on the part of the committee.

Mr. HOUDINI. I want to call attention first to a pair of slates [producing several slates before the committee]. This is not my trick. Keeler does it in this town, and he has become wealthy. Mrs. Fletcher stated that all the mediums are in moderate circumstances.

Mr. BLOOM. Have you become wealthy?

Mr. HOUDINI. You mean mentally?

Mr. BLOOM. Well, haven't you got a lot of money? You are not doing this for any advertising, are you?

Mr. HOUDINI. None whatsoever.

Mr. BLOOM. Just a minute. A good many people have suggested and made the remark, Mr. Chairman, that Mr. Houdini is seeking advertisement and such things. If you want to know what Mr. Houdini is really worth in money, I do not think Mr. Houdini would object to putting it in the record. But Mr. Houdini is absolutely independent. He does not need advertising and he does not need any more money, I can say that. He is just doing this here for the purpose of trying to prove to the people in the District of Columbia and of the country that this is an illegal thing, that they are allowing this illegal practice to be carried on in the District of Columbia; that is all.

Mr. HOUDINI. May I reply to that?

Mr. McLEOD. Yes.

Mr. HOUDINI. I have refused return engagements in the Belasco Theater in this city which would net me \$5,000 to \$7,000. I have refused engagements like that and return engagements in New York. I positively spend between \$40,000 and \$50,000 every year. I brought my staff up here. They are under salary; they are under expenses.

The spiritualists claim the churches are behind me. That is the biggest lie they can tell.

I will now do the slate trick. I have here a pair of slates which I will allow you to examine and to be marked on four sides with a piece of slate pencil, 1, 2, 3, 4, then erased, proving that the four sides have been marked. I will now tie the slates together and put this

piece of chalk pencil on top. I will take and tie the slates together like this [illustrating]. I will put them—or better still, would you please hold those so they can see I have no confederate, Mr. Rathbone? [Mr. Rathbone did as suggested.]

Mr. Hammer, drop this card in this Funk & Wagnalls dictionary, which contains thousands of words and no two page alike. I just bought this from Brentanos on my way up here [producing dictionary]. Just please drop that card in there. [Mr. Hammer complied.] There is no human being living who can tell me the number of the page in which that card has been dropped.

Now, mind you, ladies and gentlemen, this is a trick and is performed by mediums as a proof that they consult with the dead.

Incidentally, President Roosevelt and I were on board the *Imperator*, and I did this for him and he asked me, "Was it spiritualism?" When a great brain like Colonel Roosevelt asks that, there must be protection for those who can not protect themselves. I said, "No. Colonel; it is all hocus-pocus."

[Illustrating.] Spirits! I want you to please tell me to find the name written in the book. Give me the numbers of the pages. Write them between the slates and give me a message of some one I have never seen. Are you present? If you are here, pull my right ear. [Laughter.]

[Thereupon Mr. Houdini removed the handkerchief which bound the slates.]

There you are [reading from slate]. You dropped the card in the dictionary at page 169. Right?

Mr. HAMMER. Yes.

Mr. HOUDINI. The first at the top of that page is "decision," and the last one at the bottom of the page is "diviner." Is there anyone here by the name of Mrs. Florence Kahn? [Laughter and applause.]

My spirit guide tells me—George Washington is my spirit guide—he tells me in a picture. I see the lady on a ferryboat in a big, wide stream. Where is there a lady, please? Have you ever been in a ferryboat in a great broad beautiful stream? Is that right? Have I ever spoken to you, Mrs. Kahn?

Mrs. KAHN. Never.

Mr. HOUDINI. Did you get a most important letter four days ago that you decided not to answer? Yes or no?

Mrs. KAHN. Sixty-eight of them.

Mr. HOUDINI. This is a very particular one from a very dear old friend. Yes or no?

Mrs. KAHN. Yes.

Mr. HOUDINI. Tell the truth. Just be fair.

Mrs. KAHN. I said yes.

Mr. HOUDINI. Then, the message. I am just doing the inspirational stuff for you, and I now will give you evidence of my wonderful power. This is addressed to Florence P. Kahn: "Good work. You are going to find that Julius P. efforts were appreciated. (Signed) Benjamin Franklin." There is a message from Benjamin Franklin. [Laughter and applause.]

I could take that lady and bring back her husband and give you messages, and you would believe if you were inclined to spiritualistic

ideas. I could make you certain message and things he told you just before he made his trip here. I can bring the thing down. And that is the trouble, the widows are taken in. It is the easiest thing in the world to make some one whose heart is yearning to believe. Don't you believe? Don't you think, Mrs. Kahn, it is a remarkable test?

Mr. HOUSTON. Tell us how you did it.

Mr. McLEOD. You say you are not a spiritualist?

Mr. HOUDINI. I am not.

Mr. McLEOD. Tell us how you did it. How are you going to show it is not true?

Mr. HOUDINI. I will prove it. I am not allowed to expose tricks of a magical nature. I am the president of the Society of American Magicians. I want that distinctly understood, Mr. Chairman. But I will expose the trick. It is accomplished as follows:

First of all, when I came in, I can guess and pick out and say, "Clara is present," and make a guess. If I hit it, all right. If I did not hit it I say Thelma or Mary, and it fits some one. Then I inquire, "Who is that lady?" I heard Mrs. Kahn say, "I would like to get a message." Didn't you say that, Mrs. Kahn?

Mrs. KAHN. Yes.

Mr. HOUDINI. I heard you. And you were back of me and I did not turn around. I was purposely impolite and I hereby apologize for my apparent impoliteness. I found out about you and was able to give you a life history, and I simply exchanged, deducted, and made guesses; and that is all there is to it.

Mrs. COATES. He is demonstrating that he is a spiritualist.

Mr. HOUDINI. I beg to differ. If Keeler were in town I would give Keeler \$10,000 if he would do a slate trick—

Mr. HAMMER. The lady suggests you are a spiritualist and don't know it. I want you to tell how you got the writing on the slate. It will not take you but a minute.

Mr. HOUDINI. I forced the pages on you, to put the card at a certain place; pretended you had free choice, and you did not. I had them written on the slates before; see?

STATEMENT OF MRS. JANE B. COATES, 1630 IRVING STREET NW., WASHINGTON, D. C.

Mrs. COATES. Do you want me to take the oath? I am ready to take the oath, for I am telling the truth. I want to make this statement that I am telling the truth.

Mr. HOUSTON. Before you proceed will you give your profession and address?

Mrs. COATES. I have given my address.

Mr. McLEOD. You would rather make your statement under oath?

Mrs. COATES. He wanted to put his woman on oath for I am not going to falsify of anyone and my word stands with my oath. But I want my name to go down as taking it on my oath. So I will be sworn.

(Thereupon the witness was duly sworn by Mr. Rathbone.)

Mrs. COATES. And in view of the fact that I have taken the oath, I will say that Mr. Houdini claims his woman took two readings

and fooled me completely; and in view of the fact that I never make a charge for my reading. I charge \$2 for my time, and when a person comes to me they take what I give, good or bad. It is explained beforehand.

I am a premonitionist, and if I fail in giving a reading to a person who comes to me I am in exactly the same position as if a patient came to a doctor and told of a terrible pain over the appendix they had been suffering from, and when the doctor touched the appendix they cried aloud and were taken to the hospital, and when the appendix was taken out it was found to be a perfectly good appendix. And we have known clients to fool lawyers.

So I make that statement. I do not hold myself liable. I do the best I can.

I want to say that his people scribbled all over the wall paper in my room until I will have to have it repapered and it will cost me a great deal more than \$2.

It is a great privilege, Mr. Chairman, to stand here before this committee and deny the statement of Mr. Houdini and his paid accomplice, and to realize that what I say will be carried by the Associated Press into every city and hamlet of this great country of ours, repudiating and denying to our people any knowledge on my part of the table tipping ever having been conducted in the White House. I have never been inside of the White House but twice in my life—once to show it to a child and once standing in line to shake hands with Woodrow Wilson. Mr. Coolidge I do not know otherwise than one of the finest men who has ever held office as Chief Executive of our country.

I have from the beginning held a deep respect for one who is in the pursuance of his official duty has at all times set aside his personal sorrows and born his grief with the stoicism of a great soul and a great Christian. Our Nation as a body must recognize this truth. I do not believe that either the President or Mrs. Coolidge have anything to do with mediums. I have never even heard a rumor of this. We have during other presidential campaigns heard remarks made by mediums regarding patrons.

On April 7 my bill, H. R. 5726, passed the House unanimously. On May 10 it passed the Senate. I said to this woman, "When the President signs my bill and it becomes a law I intend to put our organization beyond the reach of such men as Houdini. I want it to stand out as such a white shining light of truth, of spirit, return on the higher planes of life, that no man will be able to point to it with any feeling but respect." She asked me how I had gotten it through so quickly and I said, "By pestering the Senators nearly to death." And I think I must have been shadowed about the Capitol for the past six weeks. Mr. Chairman, possibly they thought I was working against Houdini's bill. I did ask advice of Senator Capper's secretary, and as he was chairman of the Senate committee at the other hearing, maybe they connected that up. A friend of mine solicited Senator Watson's assistance. Personally I do not know these gentlemen. I do not know Senator Fletcher, though I have great admiration for his wife. A friend also asked Senator Dill to help me, but this, gentlemen, was relative to my personal

bill, which I remarked to this woman was about \$5,000. It is \$4,750. She knew that this bill was in the White House, and Houdini with his vile trickery forgot he was playing with a man of honor and sought to prejudice the President's mind against me and my bill. Had I made so gross a breach of delicacy toward our Executive as to bandy his name with Houdini's accomplice Mr. Coolidge never would have permitted that to stand in the way of duty. The bill having been approved by Congress and allowed by the Agricultural Department, is probably already signed, as it is a most just and meritorious bill for damages against my estate.

When the woman called me at 9 a. m. Monday I took the message. I remarked, "This is Houdini's woman." I had expected her, but when she came I hardly thought that Mr. Houdini would show so little acuteness as to send "the reverend." If this woman would tell the truth—and, gentlemen, any woman who will stoop to the work Houdini has paid this woman to do will probably regard her oath as little—she will corroborate the statement I am making to you. She had to wait 20 minutes before I could see her. She was so restless that she annoyed me very much, and I called to my maid, requesting her to have her sit down. When she came into my room—she had her hat on the back of her head, a soiled winter coat on, and a pair of awkward bone glasses—looking at her carefully, I said to her, "Why am I impressed to call you reverend?"

She started, and thus gave herself into my hands. I knew then I was right in my conviction. She denied it and said she could not imagine why I got such an idea. In order to see her face clearly, I said, "Those glasses are made of plain glass. Why do you wear them? Take them off; they will injure your eyes." I gave it as a command, and she obeyed so readily that I am convinced Houdini has practiced what we call "black magic" on this woman and hypnotized her. She obeys him as one in a trance. [Laughter and applause.]

Gentlemen, examine her closely. This is only my suspicion, not a direct accusation.

As soon as she took off the glasses I said to her, "Now I know where I have seen you. You sat in the box at the theater, the second box in the left, when Houdini was here." She said, "I do not know Houdini and I never saw him."

Now, at that time I clairvoyantly saw a tub of boiling water come between us on the floor, and I said, "Look here, one of us is going to get into hot water." I drew my feet under my chair. At that time I felt the presence of a man by my chair, and I said, "I feel as if I am strangling. This man here gives me that sensation." She at once claimed this as her husband. I said, "I do not know who he is, but a spirit named Lena also comes here and puts her finger to my lips and does not want me to talk to you."

She said, "Why don't you tell me who they are? That is my sister. I have been sent to you by John Bolling, who has commended you highly and wanted you to help me." I said, "I will tell you some things. You are doing a work that is killing you. In your heart you are sick of the whole dirty job, and if you don't stop it you will not live 18 months."

She said, "I am running a rooming house. Am I to give that up?" I said, "I have not said you were running a rooming house. I said give up the work you are doing."

She asked what she could do, and I said the Woman's Bureau paid \$1,800 a year to investigators and that she would be able to get a job; that I would be glad to recommend her to the police for a dandy job.

She asked me did I not see she would be married in August. I said "no."

She tried to force me into saying it, and I said, "You can not make me tell you what I do not see. I see no man coming into your life in marriage. I do see this: A man will shortly come to you and offer you a large sum of money not to betray him. Do not take his money; it is tainted. It will get you into great trouble." I had in mind Houdini.

She said, "When will this happen?" And I answered, "It might happen in 24 hours, and it might not happen for 5 years, but that man will pay you anything you ask him. He is in your power and you can ruin him. But beware how you take his money; there is a life after death."

As she got up to go she asked me how much I charged. I said, "Nothing for the reading, but \$2 for my time." I never guarantee anything, as we can not and be honest. Gentlemen, I also told her she would leave this city very suddenly to avoid a disagreeable condition. She asked would she go south. I said, "No; toward the water." She said, "Atlantic City?" I said, "Maybe." (She went to Chicago after this hearing.)

I avoided giving her any direct information other than I have stated regarding her work. She asked me what I thought of Houdini. I said, "I never felt so sorry for anyone in my life; that he had so much good in him and was destroying himself." She asked me his motive; did I believe he was working for a church. I said, "No." I had heard he was, but I did not believe it, or that it was for publicity—he did not need it; but that he was a fanatic, and if he kept on exciting his mind to the state it was in it must of necessity snap and he would find himself in an insane asylum.

Gentlemen, we can not afford to take such chances. There is a certain law of retribution. Mr. Houdini has placed so many people mentally in the asylum in these talks that his thought may return to him and place him there. Thought is the most powerful current in life to-day, and in seeking to destroy others Houdini is destroying himself.

[To a newspaper correspondent:] I did not expect disrespect from the press. Do not laugh.

I said, "I would like to protect him against himself;" that our creed taught us to love our enemies, not to hate them; and to lift them up. All that I said, Mr. Chairman, regarding the White House was used figuratively, as a matter of speech; that Houdini need not think in this bill that he was dealing merely with gypsy folk who crossed your palm for a few pennies, or a medium who faked or defrauded, but that in the shadow of the White House spiritualism had penetrated, and in my mind I was thinking of

Mrs. Harding, who openly visited mediums and many connected with her during Mr. Harding's administration; and that spiritualism was investigated and realized in the homes of wealth and refinement, where, thank God, it was being lifted out of the mire of trickery to the scientific platform upon which it belonged; that this bill would bring a vigorous protest from this powerful element to bear upon Congress.

Spiritualism, gentlemen, is the coming science of the world; it is the unfolding of a new sense within man of which he is not fully aware. Mediums of intelligence do not claim to possess supernatural power which belongs alone to them. It is the slow mark of civilization along lines called psychic. When pursued properly by study of nature and self-development, it awakens within man God-given qualities and powers. The Christ has said, "As a man thinketh, so also is he." We can not attune our minds to receive the melodies and harmonies of the spirit world without becoming more like unto the divine presence we call God.

This man Houdini, who speaks evil, sees evil, hears nothing but evil; who stands here in the midst of lawmakers and utters evil words against scientists and the commonest trickster, who sees no good in anything, has been practicing trickery and fraud for so long that all men are tricksters to him. He judges everyone who differs from his opinion as a trickster or a dupe of a trickster.

What does he know of anything pure or holy? He speaks from his heart and mind. A tree is judged by its fruits. His foul language and his insinuations are the fruits of a mind either in one or two states—vilely polluted and common or on the verge of fanatical decay.

I remarked to his decoy that I felt sorry that a man who had had such a wonderful career and record as a magician should allow himself to end his career in this manner; for I said, "When Mr. Houdini brought this rotten work of his to Congress and tried to hypnotize our Congressmen and Senators into passing a bill which violates the sacred rights of the citizens of the United States, he has met his Waterloo. Such a bill as he proposes can never be enacted, because it is unconstitutional.

She then asked me to what organization did I belong. I said, "To the American Order of the White Cross Societas," which has duly organized as a religious assembly of the District of Columbia to set forth the doctrine of spiritual science and to have perpetual existence; and I showed her the paper granting us that privilege, which paper I now present to you [offering document to the committee].

I also gave her one of our church papers and invited her to our morning service, which is held at 11 a. m. every Sunday in the L'Aiglon Salon, Eighteenth Street and Columbia Road, in the daylight.

Here is a circular regarding the doctrine I set forth and which is sold for the sum of \$5 for 10 lessons [submitting another document]. Similar courses in other creeds sell for \$25 or more. We wish to educate people to the fixed laws of nature and teach them to reconstruct their lives along higher lines of right thinking and Christ consciousness. Our mediums are called spiritual science advisers. We do ordain ministers after passing our board, but they

must serve a licentiate of two years or more; become proficient in our doctrine and live a life of purity. To be a minister is very different from being a member or an adviser.

Since Mr. Houdini's last visit we have had 17 applications for ordination and refused every one. Only two well-known mediums of unrepachable reliability have been admitted as advisers.

I heard Mr. Terry once say that "Billy Sunday was the best advertiser the devil had," and I want to state right here that Mr. Houdini has almost worked the mediums of Washington to death by his generous advertising campaigns. It is a commonly known fact that the more you paint a thing with evil the more it awakens a human desire to eat the apple. But in this case people came to find devils and have found angels, and Mr. Houdini has lost ground in his statements.

In my opinion, gentlemen, Mr. Houdini singled Madam Marcia and myself out, as we were the only two who had the pleasure of speaking before this committee previously. I also think he knew that I would be quick to resent his untruth regarding the White House and thought I would sue him for libel, as too many have foolishly done. But he has missed his shot with me. In olden days knights crossed swords with their equals and Mr. Houdini has shown himself to be a foe unworthy of my steel. I shall not give him the pleasure of having me sue him for slander and libel, although I have a right. I shall merely make this full statement as an apology for Mr. Houdini's remarks regarding the White House and repudiate them, as in any manner emanating from me, and treat this man in the future with the contempt he has merited from all decent people.

MR. RATHBONE. Mr. Bloom, make it short.

MRS. COATES. Sweet, Mr. Bloom; short and sweet.

MR. BLOOM. I take it how short it is going to be depends on your answers. In what way will this bill affect your faith?

MRS. COATES. Not in the least, because I am of a religious organization and so recognized.

MR. BLOOM. You do not do any fortune telling?

MRS. COATES. Do any sleight of hand?

MR. BLOOM. No. You just try to answer me. You do not predict the future, do you?

MRS. COATES. Mr. Bloom, when I cross-examined you—I think I cross-examined you before the Senate committee—I asked what you meant by "predicting the future." Mr. Houdini has answered that question to you to-day when he said that mediums not only have premonitions about ourselves but about other people who come to us. Houdini says there is no objection to premonitions, and I understand you and Houdini are united on this subject. I do not know how to answer you unless you tell me what fortune-telling is. You do not object to my having premonitions. I would say I do not predict the future; I have premonitions.

MR. BLOOM. Do you predict that a person could invest his money in a certain thing and make a fortune out of it?

MRS. COATES. Oh, no; I try not to.

MR. BLOOM. Do you tell fortunes?

MRS. COATES. What do you call "telling fortunes"?

MR. BLOOM. Predicting the future.

Mrs. COATES. Mr. Bloom, are you a lawyer?

Mr. BLOOM. No; I never was. That is one thing I did not do.

Mrs. COATES. If a client comes to a lawyer and says to that lawyer, "What would you do about such and such an investment," the lawyer might say, "In my opinion, that might be a good investment." If the person desiring an opinion comes and says, "I would like you to give an opinion about this investment," have I not a right to say, "My opinion would be so and so"?

Mr. BLOOM. Do you want the right in the District of Columbia to tell fortunes and predict the future?

Mrs. COATES. Mr. Bloom, when I found that in order to interview my people I had to take out that license, I went down to the license bureau and said, "I am not going to take out that license. I do not consider in my work that I ought to have to pay a license for it. If I can help the people, I want to help them." And he said, "You can not do work unless you take out a clairvoyant license." I said, "I am not going to be deterred from doing my work," but I did not want to be put in the class of gypsy queens.

Mr. BLOOM. The law does not mention spiritualists at all, does it?

Mrs. COATES. But they class spiritualists as mediums; they class them all as mediums; they make no distinction. Mr. Bloom, that is the question. The reason, it seemed to me, that mediums should be taken out of the class of clairvoyants should be clear.

Mr. BLOOM. If you are not in the class, why—

Mrs. COATES (interposing). Because they do not allow us to give interviews to the people without licenses.

Mr. BLOOM. Kindly wait until I finish my question.

Mrs. COATES. All right.

Mr. BLOOM. If the law does not in any way mention or restrict spiritualism as a faith, why should the spiritualists be concerned about this bill?

Mrs. COATES. Because we are not permitted to give interviews to people without taking out a license. It is so considered in the District of Columbia.

Mr. BLOOM. The law does not say that. The law says "that by conducting business with profit or gain, directly or indirectly, when permitted to practice their calling in the District of Columbia with reference to predicting the future." Is there anything in the spiritualistic faith or any of the books published that gives any spiritualist the right of predicting the future?

Mrs. COATES. Mr. Bloom, spiritualism is backed by the Hebrew Bible, and the Hebrew Bible was composed of prophecies by prophets and seers; and if you raise that question and say we shall not prophesy, then you are condemning the Bible.

Mr. HAMMER. Does it not condemn soothsayers, astrologists, and fortune tellers?

Mrs. COATES. No; it condemns those with an evil spirit. We have evil controls as well as good controls.

Mr. HAMMER. God does not reveal his prophecies to men. The Book of Revelations is sealed now. You claim it is not, and that you do prophesy as the Old Testament prophets did?

Mrs. COATES. May I tell you something that happened yesterday—and I have a witness in a newspaper reporter. May I tell you that, I ask you? What would you call this?

I had come to me following this meeting of Tuesday for an interview the representative of a prominent newspaper. He came into my room. I had never seen him, so far as I know, before. Mrs. Krone, of the Theosophical Society, was sitting there with me, and suddenly what we call "a condition" came over me. He was talking, and he mentioned his father's and mother's names, and it came to me; I said, "My dear sir, your mother died in a hospital while she was being operated on." He said "Yes"; and I said, "Well, was there a young girl named Gerald?" "Geraldine." "Yes. An old gentleman named William, who wears a long coat." "That is my grandfather."

William is a very common name; Geraldine is not.

There was a little trouble, but the mother wants me to assure you of her love and affection and everything was all right when she passed out.

The gentleman said, "What is this"? "This is mediumship." And he said, "There was a difference between my mother and myself, and I could not get to her bedside, and you don't know what a comfort it is to know that she forgave me before she died."

Have we the right to do that; is that prophesy?

Mr. BLOOM. No. Is there anything in this bill that prevents you doing the same thing you have explained here? What in this bill would prevent you doing that?

Mrs. COATES. Read the bill.

Mr. BLOOM. I am going to read the rights.

Mr. McLEOD. There are two other witnesses to be heard.

Mrs. COATES. May I say this, that Mr. Terry and Mr. Strack, of the National Spiritualist Church, have not had an opportunity to speak, and they are better posted on those things than I am. I would like them to answer that question.

Mr. BLOOM. Imposing a license tax on mediums, clairvoyants, soothsayers, fortune tellers, or palmists, applications for license. Do you come in that class? Unless you as a spiritualist or medium do these things, you do not come in that class. What is there in the faith of spiritualism that even says you can do these things?

Mrs. COATES. I have asked you what you consider a fortune teller. When you tell me that I will tell you whether I claim to be in that class.

Mr. BLOOM. You say that this bill is unconstitutional?

Mrs. COATES. I think it is.

Mr. BLOOM. Would you kindly tell me what city in the United States there is that you would be satisfied to work or continue under the regulations and laws of that city, outside of the District of Columbia?

Mrs. COATES. Mr. Bloom, may I answer that by making this statement, that I consider we had no trouble in the District of Columbia until Mr. Houdini entered in to find trouble for us.

Mr. BLOOM. Is there any city in the United States that allows you to do those things?

Mrs. COATES. I do not know the map as well as Mr. Houdini. And may I say that the police of the District of Columbia have been able to handle the District of Columbia in safety and peace to its citizens until Houdini told them they didn't know their business;

and the committees of both Houses of Congress have been handling the business to the absolute satisfaction of the people of the District of Columbia, and I would like to know what it is all about anyway.

Mr. BLOOM. They allowed Fenning to continue until he was found out; that is the way we are going to try and correct this thing. We have found out the evil and we are going to try to correct it.

Mr. RATHBONE. Mr. Chairman, I move that we proceed to call the other people whose names have been mentioned and give them an opportunity to be heard.

Mr. HAMMER. I want to ask the witness one question.

Mr. BLOOM. I want to make a statement.

Mr. HAMMER. I want to ask the witness one question. I asked Mr. Houdini of what nationality he was, and I want to ask you the same question.

Mrs. COATES. You want to know that of me, sir?

Mr. HAMMER. Yes.

Mrs. COATES. I am the daughter of R. R. Boarman, a prominent family of Maryland. My family were at first Catholics. Father Thomas is my father's cousin.

Mr. HAMMER. You were born in America?

Mrs. COATES. Yes. Houdini says he was born in Ohio of Jewish parentage.

Mr. HAMMER. He told us quite frankly.

Mrs. COATES. Will you ask him if he still practices Judaism?

Mr. HAMMER. What if he does? I am not blaming you for being a Roman Catholic.

Mrs. COATES. I am not a Roman Catholic; I was brought up an Episcopalian. I am not saying anything about Roman Catholics. A large number of our patrons are Roman Catholics.

Mr. RATHBONE. This committee is not considering any matters of that kind.

Mr. BLOOM. Mr. Chairman, I want to make the statement now that if I am not permitted to ask these questions now I am going to withdraw.

Mr. McLEOD. There are yet two witnesses to be heard.

Mrs. COATES. I will be perfectly willing to be questioned by any one of you.

STATEMENT OF ALFRED H. TERRY, PASTOR OF FIRST SPIRITUALIST CHURCH OF WASHINGTON, 131 C STREET NE., WASHINGTON, D. C.

Mr. TERRY. I will be perfectly willing to be questioned by any one of you. It will only take 10 minutes to make my statement, after which you can question me as much as you desire.

My name is Alfred H. Terry. I have lived in this city since about 8 years of age. I have been a public speaker and medium since I was 16. I have taken a license in this city to do my work for over 20 years, and I have been pastor of the First Spiritualist Church for the past 10 years.

The people of this country are crying out not for more laws but for less legislation. The leading legal lights in the land declare that the trouble lies in the fact that we have too many laws.

Mr. McLEOD. Mr. Terry, would it be possible for you to present your statement for the record or leave it to the committee for insertion?

Mr. RATHBONE. If you would just state in a few words what your objection is to the bill.

Mr. TERRY. I think it is very important that you gentlemen should have my testimony concerning Houdini as you have Houdini's testimony concerning us. [Applause.] He got up here and asked for 5 minutes and he consumed over 20.

Mr. HAMMER. Mr. Chairman, I am in favor of giving the gentleman some other time if he can not complete his statement now.

Mr. TERRY. I can complete it in eight minutes.

Mr. HAMMER. I hope you will do it and not try to follow Mr. Houdini's bad example.

Mr. TERRY. You call me down if I do.

Mr. RATHBONE. If you will confine yourself right to the subject matter of this bill and state what your objections to it are, then, if you please, just state in a brief way what your position is and avoid personalities, I am sure it will be for the best.

The citizens of the District of Columbia are weary of these professional reformers who come into our city to foster on us by law their pet ideas of reform. This city has become a Mecca for every crank and fanatical reformer in the country, whose supreme idea is to get some bill through.

Mr. McLEOD. Mr. Terry, is it not possible——

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Houdini is of this type, no matter how level headed he may be——

Mr. RATHBONE. I move that the gentleman present his statement and we will see whether it should go in the record.

Mr. TERRY. Suppose I cut that out?

Mr. RATHBONE. Confine yourself to the bill. We will take your statement and read it.

Mr. TERRY. This bill strikes at the most vital part of our religion, for if it becomes a law it will muzzle our mediums, who are the exponents of our religion, and without whom our religion can not exist. The work of our mediums in giving private interviews, in which they exercise the gifts of prophecy——

Mr. BLOOM. Let me ask you a question.

Mr. TERRY. Not until I get through.

Mr. BLOOM. I ask permission of the Chair——

Mr. HAMMER. I think the witness should control his time. I object to the question, if the witness objects to it.

Mr. BLOOM. I asked the chairman if I should be permitted to ask the question and he said yes.

Mr. HAMMER. I think we should respect the witness's feeling.

Mr. BLOOM. Oh, if you want to get the facts——

Mr. HAMMER. Get the facts when he gets through.

Mr. TERRY (continuing). And the discerning of spirits is as vital a part of our religion as that of the religious exercises of the representatives of any other religion, for which money is paid directly or indirectly.

The Christian Science practitioners demonstrate their religion in their private healing treatments and receive a fee for so doing.

The mediums demonstrate the religion of spiritualism in their private interviews and receive a fee for so doing. The principle is the same in both cases.

I want to speak of the license law. Concerning the license law, Mr. Sol Bloom declared mediums didn't have to take out a license. I have had to take out a license for over 20 years in this city. The license law is a wise and just one, and if properly enforced would solve the problem of keeping fakes from working in this city. This law was brought into being through the united efforts of Mr. Theodore J. Mayer, a well known business man of this city, the then three commissioners of the District of Columbia and Senator J. K. Jones, of Arkansas, and J. C. Pritchard, of South Carolina.

The conditions of this act were these: Any person applying for a license must be a resident of this city for one year, should be vouched for as a reliable citizen by the First Spiritualist Church, after which he or she should present to the superintendent of police an application accompanied by 10 letters from as many reliable business and professional men of this city, certifying to the good character of the applicant, these indorsements to be investigated by the lieutenant of police; and then upon payment of \$25 a license should be issued.

Mr. RATHBONE. Do you agree to be interrupted now?

Mr. BLOOM. I will ask you a question: How many churches has the First Spiritualist Church?

Mr. TERRY. In this city?

Mr. BLOOM. How many different branches?

Mr. TERRY. There is the Unity Spiritualist Church, of which Mr. Strack is pastor. Mrs. Coates has an organization.

Mr. BLOOM. But it is not only one church; there are several?

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Strack's and mine are both chartered under the national spiritualist association.

Mr. BLOOM. Is there any branch of the spiritualist faith that gives you the right to predict the future or tell fortunes?

Mr. TERRY. Oh, yes.

Mr. BLOOM. Show it to me.

Mr. TERRY. It comes in the use of mediumship.

Mr. BLOOM. Please remember that what I am trying to get at is the predicting of the future. I would like to have you show me in any of the pamphlets or any documents I have received from all the spiritualistic faith where it gives you the right to predict the future or tell fortunes.

Mr. TERRY. It permits the use of spiritual gifts, and one of these spiritual gifts is that of prophecy.

Mr. BLOOM. There is nothing permitting fortune telling?

Mr. TERRY. Oh, yes, there is.

Mr. BLOOM. Would you kindly show me?

Mr. TERRY. I can not; I haven't got them right here.

Mr. BLOOM. You say if we should prevent the spiritualist faith from telling fortunes or practicing the future that it would affect your faith?

Mr. TERRY. It would affect our faith, because the police officers can come in and arrest our mediums as soon as they make prophecy. They are doing it in London, England. They have a prophecy law made in the time of Queen Elizabeth.

Mr. BLOOM. What law of what city in the United States would you be willing to have enacted in the District of Columbia?

Mr. TERRY. I would have no law enacted; there is no need for such a law as this bill seeks to enact.

Mr. BLOOM. What city is there in the United States that allows you to do the things you want to be privileged to do in the District of Columbia?

Mr. TERRY. I have worked in most all New England cities and have never been molested.

Mr. BLOOM. What law do you want?

Mr. TERRY. No law; there is no need of a law.

Mr. BLOOM. You want that law which will permit a license for \$25?

Mr. TERRY. If that law was properly enforced there could not a faker work in this city.

Mr. BLOOM. How many fortune tellers are there in the District of Columbia?

Mr. TERRY. I do not know anything about it.

Mr. BLOOM. How many are licensed in the United States outside of the District of Columbia?

Mr. TERRY. I do not know anything about that.

Mr. BLOOM. Is it not a fact that there are more in the District of Columbia licensed than all the other cities put together in the United States?

Mr. TERRY. I could not say. But I do not think so.

Mr. HAMMER. Do you believe in fortune telling?

Mr. TERRY. If it belongs to prophesy, yes. I believe in the power of the prophet foretelling the future under certain conditions. History has revealed that. Julius Caesar's wife had a dream and warned him not to go to the Senate on the day he was assassinated. It has expressed itself in visions and dreams since the very beginning of time.

Mr. RATHBONE. We all know that in ancient times everybody believed in it.

Mr. TERRY. Flammarion, the French astronomer, has written a book in which he has gone into detail on these prophecies.

Mr. RATHBONE. You believe that you have divine power?

Mr. TERRY. I believe I have the same power that every man has if he will use it, inasmuch as some are naturally more musical than others or some are more artistically inclined than others. But by use we build up these faculties.

Mr. BLOOM. I am pretty musical and I can not do what you do.

Mr. TERRY. I am speaking as a preacher. I believe everybody is spirit, and being spirit possess a spiritual power. Everybody does not express it; it requires development, as any art or ability does.

Mr. RATHBONE. It seems to me that in considering this bill—and that is the only thing really before us—it is very important to know just what the attitude of yourself and others of your creed, if I may call it that, is in the matter of these charges that are made. It would to my mind be one thing decidedly if you simply charged, as Mrs. Coates said, so much for your time, giving a person an opportunity to hear your expression of opinion, or whether you charged some amount that was in excess of that and of considerable size. And a still more important consideration to my mind would

be if there was anything speculative about it, for instance, if you predicted and told a person where they could find a large sum of money hidden away, and said: "If I will tell you where to find this you will have to give me a thousand dollars," or something of that sort. That would be totally different. You realize that distinction and appreciate it yourself?

Mr. TERRY. Yes.

Mr. RATHBONE. Will you please enlighten me upon that subject, whether you charge so much, some small reasonable sum, for the time you put in talking to a person and giving your opinion for what it may be worth, or whether you go beyond that and charge more, especially if it is of a contingent nature. You understand the point I make?

Mr. TERRY. The charge I make is simply for my time. But even then I do not take the people's money unless they are satisfied with what I have given them, even if they use my time. If they say, "This reading is not satisfactory; I do not feel that it is worth \$2 or \$3," I simply say, "Well and good, let it go."

Mr. McLEOD. Then you do not charge for your time; you charge for your advice?

Mr. TERRY. If I give valuable information, I take \$2 or \$3.

Mr. McLEOD. You charge for information?

Mr. TERRY. Yes.

Mr. RATHBONE. There is a bill to amend or change the law, and I would like to ask this question: Take the hypothetical case that I gave you: Suppose a person comes and says, "I need some money," and you feel that you can point them to the place where there is some money hidden away. You prophesy they can go to a certain place and find it. Would you, according to your creed, be justified in charging any large sum like a thousand dollars?

Mr. TERRY. I can not answer your question, because I do not do such work and I never have.

Mr. BLOOM. I want to insert the District law.

(The memorandum submitted is as follows:)

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA LAW

In order to become a registered medium, clairvoyant, soothsayer, fortune teller, or palmist (by whatsoever name called) in the District, all that the prospective medium has to do is to apply to the superintendent of licenses, District Building, inclosing \$25 and letters from 10 "credible" residents that he or she has resided in the District for one year and is of good character. The letters are turned over to the superintendent of police, who turns them over to the precinct in which the medium lives for investigation. If the precinct finds that the medium has resided in the District for a year, and that the letters are bona fide, it reports back to the police superintendent, who then recommends issuance of the license. He has no discretion, neither has the superintendent of licenses. No examination whatever is made of the medium's ability to do anything.

The law on the subject is found in the appropriation act of July 1, 1902, and in an order promulgated by the District Commissioners October 15, 1902. The act provides for the payment of the \$25 and the approval of the police superintendent, and the order provides for the conditions under which the superintendent shall approve.

Mr. RATHBONE. Is it done by your people?

Mr. TERRY. I do not think it is done by any mediums I know anything about.

Mr. RATHBONE. Do reputable mediums confine themselves to a mere charge for the time, or do they go beyond that?

Mr. TERRY. I do not know any that do; I know if people get valuable information they pay me.

Mr. BLOOM. Is it not a fact that according to the present law in the District of Columbia that you can enter into a partnership with a person if you tell them that you can predict the future and tell them how to make money? Let me tell you what the law says—and this is for your information.

Mr. RATHBONE. The members of the committee would like to have a little opportunity—go on and finish.

Mr. BLOOM. This is my bill. I want to show, following up, Mr. Rathbone, what the law is, that they are privileged to do this for profit or gain; in other words, they can enter into partnership for profit or gain.

Mr. TERRY. There is a law in this city against false pretenses.

Mr. RATHBONE. That has been brought out. Then, you claim you do not go as far as the law permits you to go?

Mr. TERRY. Well, if the law permits that—

Mr. RATHBONE. That would be correct. You say you do not go as far as existing law that has yet been read would allow you to go?

Mr. TERRY. Certainly not. I never enter into any partnership with any one who comes to me.

Mr. HAMMER. I want to ask the gentleman a question: You call these readings?

Mr. TERRY. Readings or interviews.

Mr. HAMMER. You do the readings by talking to spirits that you see in the room?

Mr. TERRY. Not always. Most of it is clairvoyance.

Mr. HAMMER. And the other is telling the person that is paying the money you can show more for \$3 than you can for \$2. [Laughter.]

Mr. TERRY. When the persons want to go into more detail and further into future conditions, which would naturally consume more time, I charge \$3. But when they are satisfied with an analysis of the mental, the spiritual, the material, and the physical condition of the present and of the outlook of the immediate future, the fee is \$2.

Mr. HAMMER. You do this by conversing with spirits?

Mr. TERRY. Oh, no.

Mr. HAMMER. You see spirits and they tell you?

Mr. TERRY. I do, but in many of my readings there is not a spirit message given in them. They are merely psychic analysis of the individual, mental, material, or physical and spiritual condition.

Mr. HAMMER. But you do claim on certain occasions to see spirits and commune with spirits?

Mr. TERRY. Yes.

Mr. HAMMER. And obtain through a divine power—

Mr. TERRY. Through a natural power.

Mr. HAMMER. Is it not divine, if you can see further than the others?

Mr. TERRY. No. God is Nature—divine in the sense that Nature is God.

- Mr. HAMMER. You do not believe in a personal God?
- Mr. TERRY. I believe in God, but I do not know what God is.
- Mr. HAMMER. You do not think man was created in the image of God? You do not believe the Bible to that extent?
- Mr. TERRY. I could not say.
- Mr. HAMMER. You do not know?
- Mr. TERRY. I do not know.
- Mr. HAMMER. You do not teach that?
- Mr. TERRY. I do not know.
- Mr. HAMMER. Do you preach the doctrine of the Bible or science and evolution?
- Mr. TERRY. You know how the modernist stands?
- Mr. HAMMER. I have got some idea how they stand. No two of them agree with each other.
- Mr. TERRY. I merely speak of that as illustration. We have in spiritualism all classes of people—we have Catholics and Episcopalians, we have Baptists and Unitarians.
- Mr. HAMMER. None of them claim to commune with spirits.
- Mr. TERRY. We have Episcopalian mediums.
- Mr. HAMMER. That claim divine power?
- Mr. TERRY. Yes.
- Mr. HAMMER. Do you belong to the same branch of the Spiritualism church that Mrs. Coates?
- Mr. TERRY. No; the same as Reverend Strack.
- Mr. HAMMER. Do you ever sell love charms, or anything like that? [Laughter.]
- Mr. TERRY. No, sir.
- Mr. HAMMER. Do you ever give advice on investments?
- Mr. TERRY. No, sir.
- Mr. HAMMER. What is the advantage of predicting the future, then?
- Mr. TERRY. Why; it generally takes up matters of talents and powers of the individual, their innate possibilities and gives instructions on how to make the most of life.
- Mr. HAMMER. You do not tell a young girl how she can retain the love of her sweetheart, do you?
- Mr. TERRY. No.
- Mr. HAMMER. How will this bill be against you?
- Mr. TERRY. It is against prophecy and I make prophecies.
- Mr. HAMMER. You predict the future?
- Mr. TERRY. I predict the future, if I tell a woman of the chances of her being killed.
- Mr. HAMMER. Don't you think you ought to be restrained?
- Mr. TERRY. No; I do not.
- Mr. HAMMER. I think you should.
- Mr. TERRY. Not if I can warn.
- Mr. HAMMER. Would you mind telling what power can enable you to tell what will happen?
- Mr. TERRY. By premonition.
- Mr. HAMMER. That is divine power.
- Mr. TERRY. Well, you can call it divine.
- Mr. BLOOM. Can you tell the place on the street where that woman will be killed?
- Mr. TERRY. Such things can be done.

Mr. BLOOM. And then this woman is supposed to stay at home and not go out?

Mr. TERRY. She is supposed to be careful and escape accidents.

Mr. BLOOM. Don't you think the automobile driver ought to be the one to be careful?

Mr. TERRY. I certainly do.

Mr. McLEOD. It is a fact and I would like to make the observation that you are the first medium who has testified, so far as my recollection goes, that you do not charge for time but for predictions.

Mr. TERRY. If they are not satisfied I say, "Keep your money."

Mr. McLEOD. Is not that a fact?

Mr. TERRY. Yes.

Mr. McLEOD. The other mediums have said they charge so much for their time.

Mr. TERRY. That is their right.

Mr. McLEOD. You look on this thing somewhat differently. You do not merely pretend to give advice. You do not hold seances for the purpose of giving advice, but you want your advice followed?

Mr. TERRY. Yes.

Mr. McLEOD. You contend that in reply to Mr. Bloom's question?

Mr. TERRY. Yes.

Mr. BLOOM. Where you say if not satisfactory you returned the money, what percentage of times have you returned the money, say, out of a hundred people?

Mr. TERRY. I do not believe more than once. But I could not even say that.

Mr. BLOOM. But they are pretty well satisfied when you get through with them?

Mr. TERRY. They are.

Mr. HAMMER. Do you not tell them that you can not see spirits and tell them about spirits unless they pay you \$3; that you can not do that for \$2?

Mr. TERRY. No.

Mr. BLOOM. Haven't you told some that?

Mr. TERRY. No; I do not think I ever have.

Mr. BLOOM. Will you undertake to say, if I go to you and ask you to communicate with my mother, who has been dead a number of years, and you say you see her spirit in the room, that you can make me believe that you can see my mother's spirit and that my mother would come back and talk to you and would not talk to me?

Mr. TERRY. Do I mean to say I can make you believe it? Certainly not.

Mr. BLOOM. Or any reasonable man?

Mr. TERRY. Many reasonable men have believed.

Mr. BLOOM. Why would the spirit of the dead mother of these gentlemen here and myself, or the dead father or sister, come back and reveal themselves to you and conceal themselves from us?

Mr. TERRY. They do not do that. There are hundreds of private mediums right in the city of Washington holding seances in their own homes, holding seances in their own families, receiving messages from their spirit loved ones without the need of any public professional medium.

Mr. BLOOM. Do you believe that God is such a respecter of persons that he would select you, if I would pay you \$3, to tell me what

my mother's spirit communicated to me, and expect reasonable people to believe any such tomfoolery as that? [Applause.] What do those spirits look like?

Mr. TERRY. Do you think that is vital to go into minute details?

Mr. BLOOM. Yes.

Mr. TERRY. What has it got to do with fortune telling bills?

Mr. BLOOM. You assume there is something in your church that says you can have the right to advocate prophesy?

Mr. TERRY. We have the right to exercise spiritual powers and spiritual gifts. I can do it in any city—Worcester, Mass.; Hartford, Conn.—I know there is a law in Hartford, Conn.

Mr. BLOOM. Hartford, Conn. has a law preventing you?

Mr. TERRY. An old law of 15 years standing.

Mr. BLOOM. But they do not allow you?

Mr. TERRY. They do do it in Hartford.

Mr. BLOOM. But the law prevents that.

Mr. TERRY. They can not enforce it.

Mr. McLEOD. Is it not a fact that the Bible states that if you do this something is going to happen to you?

Mr. BLOOM. I ask the privilege of inserting a letter from Hartford, Conn., in reference to preventing fortune telling in that city. I have it right here.

(The quotation from the General Statutes of Connecticut submitted by Mr. Bloom is as follows:)

GENERAL STATUTES OF CONNECTICUT, REVISION OF 1918

SEC. 6506. Fortune telling and other fraudulent practices.—No person shall advertise by display sign, circular, or handbill, or in any newspaper, periodical, magazine, or other publication, or by any other means to tell fortunes or to reveal the future; to find or restore lost or stolen property, to locate oil wells; gold or silver, or other ore or metal or natural product, to restore lost love, friendship, or affection, to reunite or procure lovers, husbands, wives, or lost relatives or friends, or to give advice in business affairs, or advise of any kind to others for or without pay, by means of occult or psychic powers, faculties, or forces, clairvoyance, psychometry, psychology, spirits, mediumship, seership, prophecy, astrology, palmistry, necromancy or like crafty science, cards, talismans, charms, potions, magnetism, or magnetized articles or substances, oriental mysteries, or magic of any kind. No person shall obtain money or property from another by fraudulent devices and practices in the name of palmistry, card reading, astrology, seership, or like crafty science, or fortune telling of any kind where fraud or deceit is practiced. No person shall hold or give any public or private meetings or seance of any kind in the name of any religious body, society, cult, or denomination, and therein practice or permit to be practiced fraud or deception of any kind with intent to obtain from another anything of value. Any person who shall violate any provision of this section shall be fined not less than \$25 nor more than \$100 for each offense or imprisoned not more than six months or both. This section shall not be construed to prevent advertising or holding any bona fide meeting of spiritualists for purposes of worship according to their faith.

Mr. McLEOD. Is there any further witness?

STATEMENT OF MRS. ELLA McLAREN, WASHINGTON, D. C.

Mrs. McLAREN. I am a spiritual medium.

Mr. McLEOD. What is your business?

Mrs. McLAREN. Spiritual medium.

Mr. McLEOD. For how many years?

Mrs. McLAREN. For five years.

Mr. McLEOD. If you care to proceed at this time you will have to consume but five minutes.

Mrs. McLAREN. I just simply wanted to say that I have never advertised in my life.

In reference to stolen articles, I did want to say this: I do not believe any one can or any medium can find stolen articles at any and all times. I do not believe that is possible.

A medium that is true must have purity of spirit and has to live in accordance with what she believes is right with God.

I have people coming to me from different places all over this city. I can not begin to meet the number of people who call for me, and I want it fully understood I have never advertised. My price is \$3 a half hour.

Mr. McLEOD. You charge for time?

Mrs. McLAREN. For time, \$3 for half hour.

Mr. McLEOD. You do not charge for what advice you give?

Mrs. McLAREN. I do not. I do not know whether, when they come to me, I am going to give spiritual advice or what. I promise nothing.

Mr. BLOOM. Do you predict the future?

Mrs. McLAREN. At times, in some ways. Some lady might come to me and ask me in reference to her work, whether she would be successful in continuing a certain line of work. That is predicting the future, if I felt it is not; that is predicting an unfavorable future.

Mr. BLOOM. Does she tell you the kind of work she is doing?

Mrs. McLAREN. Yes, sir; and what she wishes to do. She lays the case before me.

In reference to stolen articles, I wanted to say this: I think there is only one way that those things can be gotten, and that is if one of our dear friends in the spirit world is present when the article is lost or stolen, that we believe can be impressed upon the subconscious mind of the individual, the person who has lost this article. When they come to us we do not know whether we can get it. We know what we have done. We know we have numerous letters from people telling us that our advice has led to the finding of those articles.

We believe going in the seance, laying their hands on mine and becoming in tune with them, in a good many we have a feeling that the spirit of our Great Creator comes down and impresses me what to say. I do not know what I am saying at the time. But very often I have received very many letters from people telling me how they found the articles just as I saw them. I do not say I can do it at all times. I do not think any medium living can do that.

Mr. BLOOM. Do you not do more of it by crystal reading?

Mrs. McLAREN. No, I do not.

Mr. BLOOM. You do crystal reading?

Mrs. McLAREN. It is according to what you call "crystal." I use my crystals. A great many have said Mrs. McLaren is a great mind reader. I use my crystal to gaze upon. I do not get anything out of the crystal other than a place to center, something to fix eyes upon, to keep me concentrated.

Mr. BLOOM. You are known as the greatest crystal reader in the District of Columbia?

Mrs. McLAREN. I do not know that.

Mr. RATHBONE. You use the crystal for the purpose of mental concentration?

Mrs. McLAREN. For the purpose of mental concentration only.

Mr. McLEOD. As a matter of fact, you claim you do not look at the person.

Mrs. McLAREN. If I looked at the person my eyes might wander. My work is not only with young women but also with business men; and not only of the city of Washington but all over the United States. My work is not advertised. No person ever saw Mrs. McLaren's name in any paper. I have even asked our pastor not to announce my name from the platform.

Mr. RATHBONE. You state positively your charges are just so much and it is not dependent upon the individual, the advice or upon the success of it or anything of that kind. Is that so?

Mrs. McLAREN. In case they come and I feel their time would be wasted, I have often said, "I am afraid I am not in harmony. I will not read for you; I will not take your money." But that is at the beginning, not at the end.

Mr. McLEOD. Your work is strictly as an adviser?

Mrs. McLAREN. Strictly as an adviser.

Mr. RATHBONE. What other city have you been in?

Mrs. McLAREN. Not any.

Mr. RATHBONE. How long have you been in Washington?

Mrs. McLAREN. It is the only city I have ever practiced in, I mean, to make a practice. All my life I have practiced it, but just by giving it to others free.

Mr. HOUSTON. Do you predict the future?

Mrs. McLAREN. I have. I explained to the gentlemen here in that way. In advising, I have a great many men come to me for business advice. I have never received anything other than my regular charge. I have been offered as high as \$1,000. I have refused it, because I am only charging \$3 for half hours, as I think the citizens of Washington will agree.

Mr. McLEOD. Your place of operations is in a strictly high-class neighborhood?

Mrs. McLAREN. In a strictly high-class neighborhood, residential, at 2702 Ontario Road NW.

Mr. McLEOD. As you stated, no complaints have ever been made?

Mrs. McLAREN. No complaints have been made that I know anything of; and I could not practice unless my neighbors all agreed and were willing to have me do so.

Mr. BLOOM. Mr. Chairman and gentlemen—

Mr. HOUSTON. You say sometimes you predict the future. Do you believe that every one's future is an established fact?

Mrs. McLAREN. Oh, no.

Mr. RATHBONE. You are not a fatalist?

Mrs. McLAREN. Oh, no; indeed I am not. I think it is all in myself. I could go out and steal, or I can live a clean, noble life. It is up the human being to live clean or unclean. But a little advice to young women sometimes encourages them to live clean, noble, right lives; a little advice to a discouraged man who is about to make a business deal to get in harmony. I have never yet received a letter from any person telling that I have given poor advice.

I could bring you hundreds of letters where people would say, "Thank you for the wonderful advice." But I must do it all in the spirit of God and pure thought, not at myself, entirely away from the money. Of course, we have to live, but I would not accept one penny more than \$3 per half hour.

Mr. HOUSTON. Your work is character reading?

Mrs. McLAREN. I do not know what it is. If I were to tell you, I would not know. It just comes to me. All my life I have known things before they happened, and I have been directed by unseen forces. I call it spirit of God, and I was asked by medium who was my guide. I said "God..". This person said, "You won't get very far with God as a guide." I said, "Very well; I won't get very far." But I am getting very far with God as my guide, and I shall have what he sends to me and no other.

Mr. BLOOM. Was this a spiritualist who said, "You won't get very far with God"?

Mrs. McLAREN. Not any person who is living.

Mr. BLOOM. Was he a spiritualist?

Mrs. McLAREN. I do not know what he was. But he was a person who professed to be.

Mr. BLOOM. Which church do you belong to?

Mrs. McLAREN. I am a member of the Fifth Division of Spiritual Science Church of Christ, Mrs. Coates.

Mr. BLOOM. You give advice to young girls?

Mrs. McLAREN. Don't you think young girls should go to their mother? That is just what I do, give a mother's advice to a girl.

Mr. BLOOM. That is not fortune telling.

Mrs. McLAREN. Yes, it is.

Mr. BLOOM. You are not predicting?

Mrs. McLAREN. I am predicting and telling the wonderful things that will come to them if they continue to go on the road they have started.

Mr. BLOOM. You are just in the same class as an attorney?

Mrs. McLAREN. I call it "spiritual attorney," Mr. Bloom.

Mr. BLOOM. Mr. Chairman, the gentleman mentioned Hartford, Conn., and I would like to read just a few lines of the law applying to Hartford—section 6506, "Fortune Telling and other Fraudulent Practices."

(Thereupon Mr. Bloom read the section referred to, heretofore introduced as an exhibit in this hearing.)

STATEMENT OF MRS. GRACE MARCIA, WASHINGTON, D. C.

Mrs. MARCIA. I will make it very brief. I am not going into fortune telling or spiritualism. I only want vindication. All I want is justice, and as an American woman, will you please put me under oath.

(The witness was thereupon sworn by Mr. McLeod.)

Mrs. MARCIA. That is valuable all over the world, being an American born and bred.

Mr. Houdini stated before the committee on Tuesday that he caught Madame Marcia—Marchia he pronounced it, not Marcia—and that I stole his \$10. Will you please put him under oath? Let him

please define what he means by "caught"—that word. May I ask, Mr. Houdini?

Mr. McLEOD. If he cares to answer.

Mr. HOUDINI. She is under oath. Why should I speak for the Madame?

Mrs. MARCIA. That was your statement.

Mr. HOUDINI. I am not on trial.

Mrs. MARCIA. You are on trial in a way. Will you tell me that?

Mr. HOUDINI. Repeat the question and I will answer.

Mrs. MARCIA. I asked you, will you please say what you mean by "caught"?

Mr. HOUDINI. All right.

Mrs. MARCIA. Quickly now. I only have five minutes.

Mr. HOUDINI. You told that you predicted President Harding's election and death, and I sent one of my investigators, and you kept her almost two hours and you didn't make a guess anyway either—of course, knowing that you might guess she is from New York and that she is an investigator, she told you she was born in Cincinnati and all the mediumistic stuff that you put in proved to me that you were using astrological stuff to keep out of the clutches of the law; and you took my \$10 and you were asked to put it in writing and you said "That would cost you \$15, and not \$10."

Mrs. MARCIA. Absolutely.

Mr. HOUDINI. And in order to protect herself, as she does everywhere, she put secret marks on your wall and all over—

Mrs. MARCIA. She took a blue pencil and put "No. 3" or "B," I am uncertain. I saw her do it—on my wall paper. She should be arrested for defacing property.

Mr. HAMMER. Defacing property is not indictable.

Mrs. MARCIA. I know malicious mischief is. I am not a lawyer, though I have never gone to school. I want justice and that is due every American.

Is it not a fact, Mr. Houdini, that in the theatre I challenged your \$10,000 to disprove the fact that I made Mr. Harding's prediction of nomination and death—just a minute—I also openly invited—what was the necessity of sending a paid investigator? There are no tricks in my home.

I also ask you this: I invited you and your manager.

Is it not a fact that before the last hearing in the Senate, before the Senate committee, that you personally, before I spoke at all, accepted me. You said "It has nothing to do with you, Madame Marcia. It does not cover you." And Mr. Bloom published it far and wide.

Mr. HOUDINI. Am I to reply?

Mrs. MARCIA. Yes.

Mr. HOUDINI. I said I am not talking of astrology. But you smelled cancer as a lady and said "Cancer killed her father."

Mrs. MARCIA. Put her under oath. I never said a word about her father. I have a witness I never did.

Mr. HOUDINI. You said "Cancer killed her father."

Mrs. MARCIA. I do not know. I think this would be just a little out of order. But I won't say it. I will give you the benefit of the doubt. I have a very good memory.

In the first place, I do not advertise. You have given me more advertisement than I ever had before. I could be a freak at present and get \$10 to look at me. And my telephone ringing. So, thank you for the "buggy ride." [Laughter and applause.]

There are no tricks connected with my home, none whatever. It is always open. The colored maid admitted her and she walked up and down the floor and said she had a sick baby out in a taxicab—had a young babe. She gave me a date. There were two very prominent ladies in the house at the time, and we were discussing this hearing, and they said, "We will drive by the Capitol, Marcia, and see what is doing."

She heard that. All the doors are open. I never mentioned a Congressman. I would not do it. It is not ethical, to begin with. My livelihood is here.

I called Mr. Bloom up personally and asked was it necessary for me to be here, because I had been exempt the last time, and I had been under the care of a physician for heart trouble for the last five months. I am too ill to be here.

Now, just the same—don't think I am afraid; I am not afraid of any living thing. You told me that that was optional with me.

Mr. HOUDINA. If you wanted to come?

Mrs. MARCIA. If I wanted to come or not. That is why I called Mr. Bloom, not as a favor. I do not know Senator Capper. I have been offered large sums by papers to publish my files. I have refused it. I am earning bread and butter for a mother 98 years old, and have all I can do in my physical state.

Mr. BLOOM. You are not a fortune teller?

Mrs. MARCIA. He said I am a thief. I am accused of stealing \$10.

Mr. BLOOM. That will be corrected.

Mrs. MARCIA. It must be corrected now publicly before everybody.

Mr. BLOOM. I do not think Mr. Houdini meant that.

Mrs. MARCIA. That is a mistake. I am not a fortune teller. And I gave up a copy of the chart. Whether the data given me was correct I know not. But, however, in view of the fact, they are my text books and will give anybody a reading. He said a few minutes ago that I played upon President Harding because he was weak, and Mrs. Harding. Would you ladies and gentlemen call the late Florence Harding a degenerate or weak-minded or an imbecile? Would any of you? [Applause.] Is there any law in the United States to prohibit—

Mr. HOUDINA. I said the mediums were; not Mrs. Harding.

Mrs. MARCIA. A minute ago you said I did. Bear witness, you said I did. As a matter of fact, the predictions were made in the presence of a former Senator's wife in this room. I am not going to mention them. It is history. It has been published.

Mr. HOUDINI. You didn't give them that. You refused interviews?

Mrs. MARCIA. I did not give an interview to Mr. Harding.

Mr. HOUDINA. You gave interviews to Mrs. Harding?

Mrs. MARCIA. Of course.

Mr. HOUDINA. I thought you said you did not?

Mrs. MARCIA. I said, did you class her as imbecile for coming to me?

Mr. BLOOM. Will this law affect you?

Mrs. MARCIA. That is what I am trying to find out. If this law does not affect me as a fortune teller or astrologist, why does he send a paid investigator into my home and brand me as a thief in this room?

Mr. BLOOM. I do not think Houdini meant that.

Mrs. MARCIA. I demand protection, and if I do not get it I will personally make him pay for it.

Mr. McLEOD. Mr. Houdini, you do not mean that this lady stole \$10, as she expresses it?

Mr. HOUDINI. I did not mean it that way. I meant that you took \$10 from my investigator and gave her misinformation and information that was not right.

Mr. McLEOD. Which she voluntarily gave.

Mr. HOUDINI. She charged.

Mrs. MARCIA. I did not charge.

Mr. HOUDINI. She bargained.

Mrs. MARCIA. I beg pardon.

Miss MECKENBERG. I bargained for \$5.

TESTIMONY OF MISS ROSE MECKENBERG

(The witness was duly sworn.)

Mr. McLEOD. State your full name.

Miss MECKENBERG. Rev. Rose Meckenberg.

Mr. McLEOD. What is your residence?

Miss MECKENBERG. New York City. I just want to read from my report. It will cover everything.

Mrs. MARCIA. Now the fact stands, as I said, that you need legislation. The United States law says this should be absolutely free—

Mrs. MARCIA. You were granted five minutes and took an hour. Mr. Chairman, just a moment. As I say, the question comes up of dealing with the individual and not with the subject. The law says if you commit a crime, major or minor, you are subject to arrest and trial by jury, and that you are innocent until proven guilty.

Mr. BLOOM. That has nothing to do with this.

Mrs. MARCIA. It has. Has she a copy of the chart I gave your witness?

Miss MECKENBERG. Yes, I have.

Mrs. MARCIA. Can you read it?

Miss MECKENBERG. I will read my report, which is more concise.

Mrs. MARCIA. You can not read it. Say yes or no.

Miss MECKENBERG. I do not care to answer you.

Mrs. MARCIA. You do not care to answer. Very well, I have the chart. I was fully cognizant of who the woman was.

Miss MECKENBERG. Madame Marcia told me she had been associated with Mrs. Mary Pepper in New York, and we have a record she was at one time one of the most notorious mediums—and Madame Marcia was a spiritualistic medium who went into trances, and in giving those astrologist readings she fishes for information and uses the information for giving the outline.

Mrs. MARCIA. She said I fished for information. I have a good memory. In the past when he, Houdini, and his investigators were here before, she called me on the phone in the same voice. I was in the theater. I also have pretty good eyesight—not as good as it was, but I would remember, and she asked repeatedly for an appointment.

Miss MECKENBERG. That is not so.

Mrs. MARCIA. She says she gave me serial numbers. I have the bills she gave. I gave her a copy of this chart. I knew who she was. I was positive in my own mind, and that is not premonition. On the next question I wanted to see whether she would really give the truth.

Mr. HAMMER. Let us hear what Mrs. Marcia has to say.

Mrs. MARCIA. I want you to strike out what was said about my association with Mrs. Pepper, a disreputable character. It can not be she was; it was not proven.

I can not remember the time since I could talk that I could not tell things or see things. When I first began, after I was thrown on my own resources, after being deserted by a husband with two little babies I had to earn a livelihood, and I resorted to clairvoyance or mediumship. Years ago I got away from it because it was not satisfying, and I took up astrology. Any boy or girl of 8 years of age can learn astrology. The textbooks are open, and if you ask how I knew, they are there in the Congressional Library. She asked me what conditions existed, and I took down the textbooks and read them the same as a lawyer or doctor or your engineer will do.

Mr. HOUSTON. I move that we adjourn until half past 7 o'clock to-morrow.

Mr. McLEOD. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(Thereupon at 1.05 o'clock p. m. the subcommittee adjourned to meet to-morrow, Friday, May 21, 1926, at 7.30 o'clock p. m.)

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE COMMITTEE ON
THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
Friday, May 21, 1926.

The subcommittee met in the caucus room, House Office Building, at 7.30 p. m., Hon. Frank R. Reid presiding.

STATEMENT OF MRS. ELLA C. HIAWATHA

Mr. REID. State your name to the committee.

Mrs. HIAWATHA. My name is Ella C. Hiawatha, pastor of the Colored Progressive Spiritual Church, 1312 Q NW.

Now, in this meeting I see many white mediums that visit my place from time to time.

Mr. REID. Is there any difference between white and colored mediums?

Mrs. HIAWATHA. There should not be. We claim there is a oneness. We all work. We all work, and every time my door is opened there is a crowd there. And I want to say that as we are being attacked as fraudulents, robbers, tricksters, if there is one that has ever

received a fraudulent message in my place, here is the place to speak.

MR. REID. Have you any satisfied customers you want to bring in and exhibit?

MRS. HIAWATHA. Satisfied customers? What do you mean "satisfied customers"?

MR. REID. I think not long ago I read an article by the relatives of John Quincy Adams about some things that were prophesied that came true.

MRS. HIAWATHA. Prophecies. There always have been prophecies before the coming of Christ. Prophecy? I think in Fourth Kings, twenty-second verse, it is said, "Your sons and daughters shall prophesy, and you shall hear the words before you speak them." What are you going to do with it?

MR. REID. How do you want the Spiritualist Church to conform to your ideas of spiritualism?

MRS. HIAWATHA. I have always said; several years ago in my meetings, I said to my people when I spoke to them, "The time is coming when we will need something else besides table tipping, and such things as that. We need scientific proof that we do reveal the spiritual truths." And I said, "The time is coming when we will have to prepare for it and be able to meet it."

MR. REID. That is what I am asking you. What scientific proof have you to point to?

MRS. HIAWATHA. We mean we are just at the point, where we are progressing each and every day higher and higher. That is what I mean. This religion is practical truth. It is in daily use and helps men and women, boys and girls. That is what I mean. It has opened the door and loosened the shackles off of men and women and released them, so to speak, from prison. You don't have to go to jail to be in prison. A man can be in his own prison house.

MR. REID. Get right down to the bill. This bill prohibits certain things.

MRS. HIAWATHA. I am in favor of that. I have said so all along.

MR. REID. You think clairvoyance ought to be abolished?

MRS. HIAWATHA. Clairvoyance means to foresee.

MR. REID. Does the word "clairvoyant" have any meaning to you in the ordinary sense?

MRS. HIAWATHA. I am a spiritualist.

MR. REID. I am asking you about clairvoyants.

MRS. HIAWATHA. Clairvoyants?

MR. REID. Yes. We call them street fakirs.

MRS. HIAWATHA. You do?

MR. REID. Yes. Do you distinguish between them and your spiritualists?

MRS. HIAWATHA. I am a spiritualistic reader. I don't read cards. I don't read the crystals. I depend upon spiritual influence and the divine intelligence for my messages.

MR. REID. Suppose you move the committee, Mr. Rathbone and the rest of them.

MRS. HIAWATHA. Move them?

MR. REID. Yes. How are you going to move them, so as to get your message over to them, so they will think the bill is bad and vote against it?

Mrs. HIAWATHA. I do not want to do that.

Mr. REID. I want to hear that.

Mrs. HIAWATHA. I am here as a defendant of the cause, and I have been in the spiritualistic work for 20 years, and I have come here to say something for the cause.

Mr. REID. Have you said all you care to say?

Mrs. HIAWATHA. And I have said all along there should be some amendment to the rule; that is, to stop these people from infringing on the word "spiritualism." I have said that all along.

Mr. REID. What do you think your pure spiritualism takes in, as you understand it? That is what I asked you a while ago.

Mrs. HIAWATHA. Takes in?

Mr. REID. Yes.

Mrs. HIAWATHA. Takes in what?

Mr. REID. Does it take in clairvoyants?

Mrs. HIAWATHA. That would mean card readers and clairvoyants as well as spiritualists.

Mr. REID. You are not in favor of fighting them?

Mrs. HIAWATHA. Yes. I am in favor of fighting everything that is wrong. I hold, as I have said to my people in speaking to them, there should be a law in the District of Columbia that every medium, black and white, there should be a meeting once every month where each and every medium would come in and bring in a report of what they had been doing in that month.

Mr. REID. Tell the committee some of the good things you have done. I understand you have been a medium for 20 years?

Mrs. HIAWATHA. Yes.

Mr. REID. All right. Tell the committee some of the things you have done.

Mrs. HIAWATHA. I have helped hundreds of people in that 20 years. I have helped the sick.

Mr. REID. Physically?

Mrs. HIAWATHA. Physically. I have helped the poor, I have helped the needy. Some of them have come to me, only this week, and said: "Well, Madam, I have nothing to give you. God will pay you." I know He pays me each and every day, or else I wouldn't be here.

Mr. REID. Do they pay you anything besides that? Do you get any money besides those promises?

Mrs. HIAWATHA. Every one of us are paid for our hire.

Mr. REID. You do get real money besides that, do you?

Mrs. HIAWATHA. That is what we pay a license for.

Mr. REID. And you get paid?

Mrs. HIAWATHA. Yes.

Mr. REID. How do you charge? Do you charge by the day or week?

Mrs. HIAWATHA. By the day or week? Oh, no.

Mr. REID. By the treatment?

Mrs. HIAWATHA. For 20 years I have never had an advertisement in the papers. When you advertise that is an invitation to get them to come. I have never done it. My doors are open without the price or the money. Do you think if a person comes to my door I would turn them away because they didn't have a dollar? No. I will help them that need help.

Mr. REID. You do get money?

Mrs. HIAWATHA. Certainly we do. Do you think I am going to tell a lie about it? No.

Mr. REID. Oh, no; of course not. We would not expect that. But from your profits you have been able to maintain yourself?

Mrs. HIAWATHA. I have never been able to buy a house yet. That is why I say we are poorly paid.

Mr. REID. Do you have any rates among the mediums?

Mrs. HIAWATHA. Any rates?

Mr. REID. Yes.

Mrs. HIAWATHA. No.

Mr. REID. Any standard rates?

Mrs. HIAWATHA. No. There is not a medium that belongs to my church, and I have quite a number, that is paid any salary, not one. We don't ask it.

Mr. REID. Suppose Mr. Rathbone and Mr. Zihlman and myself came to see you, how would you know how much to charge. Mr. Zihlman is wealthy, I am poor, and Mr. Rathbone expects to be rich.

Mr. RATHBONE. How long will I have to suffer that suspense?

Mrs. HIAWATHA. Many times people come to me, and if anyone comes to me that has no money, I know it. Don't you know that I do?

Mr. REID. No.

Mrs. HIAWATHA. If that is the last \$2 that person has, I know it.

I say, "Take that \$2. You need it." I depend on God and a higher power to take care of me.

Mr. REID. Do they come back at some other time and give it to you?

Mrs. HIAWATHA. They don't have to.

Mr. REID. Do they ever come back?

Mrs. HIAWATHA. Not that I remember.

Mr. REID. They have never come back?

Mrs. HIAWATHA. Not that I can remember.

Mr. REID. You do not do as lawyers do—charge all the traffic will bear?

Mrs. HIAWATHA. No. We don't do that.

Mr. REID. Mr. Rathbone, any questions?

Mr. RATHBONE. No.

Mr. REID. Mr. Zihlman, do you want to ask any questions about your future, past, or present?

Mr. ZIHLMAN. No.

Mr. REID. That is all.

Mrs. HIAWATHA. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF REV. H. P. STRACK

Mr. STRACK. Honorable Chairman and members of the judicial subcommittee of the House District Committee, we challenge the testimony given by Mrs. McDowell before this committee at this morning's session for reasons, to wit:

First. Deponent states that upon advice of a medium who, with false evidence and who being in collusion with one Doctor Hubbell, defrauded the said deponent out of \$60,000.

Mr. REID. Is that you as deponent?

Mr. STRACK. Some one before the committee this morning.

Mr. REID. Some one else was deposing this morning? That is not their affidavit you are reading now?

Mr. STRACK. No.

Mr. REID. You are talking about the deponent in the affidavit read this morning?

Mr. STRACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. STRACK. Second. Deponeth sayeth not; that Doctor Hubbel was the original owner of the property or properties in question, and that through some fraudulent transaction he was dispossessed of such ownership and that he found it necessary to enter suit in the civil court at Rockville, Md., praying the court for relief and re-possession of his properties.

Third. That the three judges of the trial court, after hearing the evidence, did find for the plaintiff, Doctor Hubbell, and ordered the property returned to him.

Fourth. From the decision rendered by the court at Rockville, Md., it appears there was first a collusion to dispossess Doctor Hubbell of his property, which was restored to him by order of the court. This would prove that the deponent did not sustain the loss of \$60,000 through the advice of a medium, but by a decision of the court. If there was any collusion, as appears in the testimony and the decision of the court, it was between the medium and the deponent, and not between the medium and Doctor Hubbell, as the court sustained Doctor Hubbell and rendered in his favor.

We therefore challenge the testimony of the deponent as being incompetent, and move the testimony be stricken from the record of this committee.

Mr. REID. Of course, we are not going to strike it out, but you can put in your opposition to it. Whom do you want?

Mr. STRACK. Doctor Hubbell is here, and I would like to have him called to testify.

Mr. REID. Mr. Rathbone, will you advise us whether or not this is an appropriate time to receive evidence in contradiction of the statements made this morning?

Mr. RATHBONE. I will submit the situation to the committee, if I understand it correctly.

Mr. REID. Just state it shortly, so the committee may understand it intelligently.

Mr. RATHBONE. There was a witness, Mrs. Dowell, who was offered this morning and who testified in substance that some medium had advised a certain man, Doctor Hubbell, I think it was, to commence a suit against her. So far as I was able to gather, the suit has been successful on the part of Doctor Hubbell. She claimed that came within the provision against defrauding through mediumship. I asked the question of the witness whether or not it was through mediumship that it was done, and it appeared to me, as far as I could make out, that it was through the advice the medium had given to the plaintiff in the case. In my judgment, I do not think that would have anything to do with the bill in question. I do not think the bill contemplates a situation of that character.

Mr. REID. Will you explain to the chairman how such a question is affected in any way by this bill? We do not want to take up the time unless it is material to the issue.

Mr. RATHBONE. As I gather it, in my opinion, it would not be material to this bill at all; but it seems they want to say something about it.

Mr. REID. Who made the charge this morning?

Mr. HOUDINI. Mrs. Hirons has a number of papers.

Mr. REID. We will try to determine whom we want to hear, Mr. Houdini. Was she your witness who testified this morning?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes; that she had been defrauded of \$60,000.

Mr. REID. You can disprove that. Go ahead.

STATEMENT OF J. B. HUBBELL

Mr. REID. Did you ever have \$60,000, or property worth \$60,000?

Mr. HUBBELL. Yes.

Mr. REID. Did somebody take it away from you?

Mr. HUBBELL. Yes.

Mr. REID. Who was it?

Mr. HUBBELL. Mrs. Hirons.

Mr. REID. She took it away from you?

Mr. HUBBELL. Yes.

Mr. REID. Under what guise or excuse or reason?

Mr. HUBBELL. Posing as a medium herself.

Mr. REID. And you gave her the \$60,000?

Mr. HUBBELL. Under her direction as a medium.

Mr. REID. Did you finally get it back?

Mr. HUBBELL. I did.

Mr. REID. How?

Mr. HUBBELL. Through the court of equity.

Mr. REID. In Rockville, Md.?

Mr. HUBBELL. In Rockville, Md.

Mr. REID. Does not that prove instead of disproving it?

Mr. STRACK. That is what I said.

Mr. REID. I thought you wanted to disprove that testimony.

Mr. STRACK. No; we want to prove it.

Mr. REID. Then Mr. Houdini's witness this morning was right?

Mr. STRACK. No; she was wrong.

Mr. REID. Is that correct?

Mr. STRACK. That is what we want to prove.

Mr. REID. Mr. Houdini, what do you think about it? It seems rather queer. You made the charge that a man lost \$60,000 because of some fraudulent acts of a medium. Now they prove it.

Mr. HOUDINI. The lady here holds papers that she paid him the money, which he denied. He came here to Washington and visited a medium, who told him what to do. By an accident this lady went into the barn and found these. And you had her counsel?

Mr. HUBBELL. Yes.

Mr. HOUDINI. When I say "you," I am only repeating the lady's words. Is this your writing on this paper I am showing to you?

Mr. HUBBELL. I presume it is, as nearly as I can see.

Mr. HOUDINI. Are you a spiritualist?

Mr. HUBBELL. I am.

Mr. HOUDINI. Did you ever visit a lady named Warnecke?

Mr. HUBBELL. I did.

Mr. HOUDINI. Thank you. That is what I thought. You had her counsel and advice, and she paid you the \$11,000. That lady claims she never was a medium.

Mr. HUBBELL. You say that lady says she never paid the \$11,000?

Mr. HOUDINI. She has the evidence here to prove it, sworn to.

Mr. HUBBELL. She has not.

Mr. HOUDINI. I am not going to argue.

Mr. REID. I want to get this clear.

Mr. HUBBELL. Yes, sir.

Mr. REID. You got back the \$60,000?

Mr. HUBBELL. Yes. No; I only got part of it back.

Mr. REID. You tried to get it back?

Mr. HUBBELL. Yes; whatever was left.

Mr. REID. Whatever was left?

Mr. HUBBELL. Yes.

Mr. REID. Had some medium taken that away from you?

Mr. HUBBELL. This medium did.

Mr. REID. You paid another medium who gave you advice how to get it back from the other medium?

Mr. BLANTON. Mr. Chairman, I ask that we have order and that everybody be seated. I would like to see the witness. People are standing between me and the witness and I can not see him.

Mr. REID. We can not have so many assistant witnesses. When the time comes we will call upon you.

So that I may get this clear, we will proceed with the evidence.

Mr. STRACK. I would like to say just a word.

Mr. REID. About this particular matter?

Mr. STRACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. REID. All right.

Mr. STRACK. The way the case has been presented to me, Doctor Hubbell was the original owner of the property, and through some transaction a Mrs. McDowell got possession of the property. Doctor Hubbell had to take recourse to the court in Rockville, Md., and sued for recovery, and the court decided in his favor.

Mr. RATHBONE. And he claims some medium advised him to bring the suit.

Mr. STRACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. REID. You are proving just exactly what they charge, or I misconceive what you are talking about.

Mr. STRACK. The witness for Mr. Houdini charged that the medium advised fraudulently, and that is what we want to disprove.

Mr. REID. Which advice do you mean, the one he lost the property on or the one he recovered it on?

Mr. STRACK. When he first lost the property. That is the way I understand it.

Mr. REID. Do you know enough about it to state it?

Mr. STRACK. That is why we have the doctor here, and the major.

Mr. REID. All right, doctor. You lost \$60,000 through a medium? Is that correct?

Mr. HUBBELL. This medium here.

Mr. REID. One medium.

Mr. HUBBELL. Yes.

Mr. REID. One other medium came in afterwards?

Mr. HUBBELL. Yes.

Mr. REID. And this second medium advised you how to get the \$60,000 back?

Mr. HUBBELL. She told me to get an honest lawyer.

Mr. REID. Did she charge you for that?

Mr. HUBBELL. She did not.

Mr. REID. Where do you claim the fraud is, Mr. Houdini?

Mr. HOUDINI. Did you ever get a message from Clara Barton through a medium?

Mr. HUBBELL. I did.

Mr. REID. What point are you trying to put over? I think it was good advice, to get an honest lawyer.

Mr. HOUDINI. I just want to show how people are separated from their property. Mr. Strack, the secretary, or whatever he is, said that they are all honest and they did not charge only a certain amount. I said, and I can prove it, that millions of dollars are taken from the gullibles every year.

Mr. REID. That is not confined to spiritualism.

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes; it is.

Mr. REID. You do not need to argue that. [Applause.] You will have to refrain from applauding here. The point I want to find out, if it is material, is this: The first medium took the \$60,000 away from this gentleman?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes.

Mr. REID. A second medium came along and told him to hire an honest lawyer and he could get it back.

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes.

Mr. REID. That proves the point you are talking about.

Mr. HOUDINI. That is all.

Mr. REID. What are you quarreling about?

Mr. HOUDINI. That is all.

Mr. REID. Who is the next witness. That is all, Doctor Hubbell.

Mr. HOUDINI. Is Mr. Sears present?

Mr. REID. I will attend to the calling of the witnesses. [Applause.] If you do not keep quiet we will have to clear the room, and the committee will have to sit here alone. I would hate to do that.

STATEMENT OF MRS. J. M. WARNEKE

Mr. REID. What is your name?

Mrs. WARNEKE. J. M. Warneke.

Mr. REID. Where do you live?

Mrs. WARNEKE. On Thirteenth Street, 3427.

Mr. REID. In Washington?

Mrs. WARNEKE. Oh, yes.

Mr. REID. How long have you lived here?

Mrs. WARNEKE. Thirty years I have been a medium.

Mr. REID. Have you made your living by being a medium?

Mrs. WARNEKE. Only my living, and raised six children, and I have no bank account like this gentleman has.

Mr. REID. Have you worked at it for 30 years?

Mrs. WARNEKE. Yes.

Mr. REID. During that time how many people have consulted you?

Mrs. WARNEKE. I could not count them.

Mr. REID. Thousands of people?

Mrs. WARNEKE. Yes, and some of the best people in Washington.

Mr. REID. Thousands of them?

Mrs. WARNEKE. Yes.

Mr. REID. During that time did you come in contact with Doctor Hubbell?

Mrs. WARNEKE. I came in contact with Miss Barton first, who was a friend of mine, and then Doctor Hubbell.

Mr. REID. I want to get the facts. You were not instrumental in taking \$60,000 away from Doctor Hubbell, were you?

Mrs. WARNEKE. No. I didn't know how much he had. Until this woman stepped in I never had my foot in his house.

Mr. REID. Tell us how you understand Doctor Hubbell lost his property valued at \$60,000, and what you had to do with his losing it or recovering it.

Mrs. WARNEKE. I had nothing to do with his losing it.

Mr. REID. Well, with recovering it.

Mrs. WARNEKE. With recovering it. I told him to get an honest lawyer. That was all. But this woman fell on the floor in a trance, because I am a trance medium, to make out that Clara Barton consulted her.

Mr. REID. Who is Clara Barton?

Mrs. WARNEKE. She used to be with the Red Cross, and she had given this to Doctor Hubbell. But since the first day I never have seen that woman again.

Mr. REID. Did you ever talk to Clara Barton's representative or anybody else, that affected the doctor so he let go of his property?

Mrs. WARNEKE. No.

Mr. REID. You had nothing to do with that?

Mrs. WARNEKE. No.

Mr. REID. You were in on the recovery?

Mrs. WARNEKE. Yes.

Mr. REID. You helped him recover it by giving him good advice?

Mrs. WARNEKE. Yes.

Mr. REID. Did you charge him for it?

Mrs. WARNEKE. No.

Mr. REID. Did he pay for it?

Mrs. WARNEKE. Not a cent.

Mr. REID. Did he ever come back and give you any money?

Mrs. WARNEKE. Not a cent.

Mr. REID. That is all. Who is your next witness?

Mr. STRACK. Major Sears.

STATEMENT OF W. H. SEARS

Mr. REID. What is your name?

Mr. SEARS. W. H. Sears.

Mr. REID. Are you a major?

Mr. SEARS. They call me a "General" sometimes.

Mr. REID. What is your business?

Mr. SEARS. Attorney at law.

Mr. REID. Do you practice in Washington?

Mr. SEARS. Here and other places.

Mr. REID. In what capacity are you speaking?

Mr. SEARS. One of the principal witnesses in that case.

Mr. REID. Were you a lawyer in the case?

Mr. SEARS. I drew the deed to that property.

Mr. REID. For Mrs. Hirons or somebody else?

Mr. SEARS. To Mrs. Hirons.

Mr. REID. All right.

Mr. SEARS. I want to cite to you the records of the Rockville court and the Court of Appeals of Maryland. Both courts decided in favor of Doctor Hubbell.

Mr. REID. All right. We will take care of that.

Mr. SEARS. The facts and evidence offered and accepted in the court were that Mrs. Hirons was acting in the capacity of a practicing medium, and speaking to Doctor Howell as the spirit of Clara Barton or the spirit of Clara Barton speaking through her directed Doctor Howell to deed this property to Mrs. Hirons.

Mr. REID. What for?

Mr. SEARS. In order to build a great memorial at Glen Echo. That not being carried out, and Doctor Hubbell discovering he was going to be defrauded, he brought this suit in the court at Rockville, Md., to get his property back. She claimed she paid him for it. It was shown she had not paid anything.

Mr. REID. Does not that prove the contention of Mr. Houdini that people's property was taken away from them by fraudulent means?

Mr. SEARS. That is true. She was a practicing medium.

Mr. REID. That is your point here?

Mr. SEARS. That is the matter I was interested in.

Mr. REID. We are all interested in it.

Mr. BLANTON. May I ask a question?

Mr. REID. Certainly. A distinguished member of the committee, Mr. Blanton, desires to ask you some questions.

Mr. SEARS. All right.

Mr. BLANTON. Was Mr. Fenning connected with that suit?

Mr. SEARS. I never heard of it.

Mr. BLANTON. Mrs. Hirons claims that he was.

Mr. SEARS. Well, I don't know. Judge Peter was the attorney for Doctor Hubbell in the beginning, and when he was put on the bench he had to get another lawyer.

Mr. BLANTON. Was there a lawyer connected with Judge Peter in that case in Rockville, Md.?

Mr. SEARS. I think not. He was alone until he retired and went on the bench. Then his son took his place. I believe Mr. Bouic was in the case. Mr. Bouic and his son took his place.

Mr. RATHBONE. I may not have this straight in my mind, but, as I understand it, Mrs. McDowell claims she lost \$60,000 through that lawsuit. Is that right?

Mr. SEARS. Yes, sir.

Mr. RATHBONE. That is where the money was lost?

Mr. SEARS. Yes.

Mr. RATHBONE. I was not getting that straight. Was there more than one loss that was sustained, that is, complained of?

Mr. SEARS. I didn't know there was but one loss.

Mr. RATHBONE. That is the loss of \$60,000 by Mrs. McDowell. Is that correct?

Mr. REID. No; by Doctor Hubbell.

Mr. SEARS. By Doctor Hubbell. Doctor Hubbell deeded the property without consideration to Mrs. Hirons, and afterwards compelled her to deed it back.

Mr. RATHBONE. Mrs. McDowell has not lost anything?

Mr. SEARS. Mrs. McDowell has not lost anything.

Mr. REID. She does not claim she lost anything, does she?

Mr. RATHBONE. I understood this morning she did, and it was the medium that advised that the lawsuit be brought.

Mr. SEARS. A medium told Doctor Hubbell the way to get it back was to get a good lawyer.

Mr. RATHBONE. She advised him to get a lawyer, and the lawyer advised him to sue.

Mr. SEARS. Yes, sir.

Mr. RATHBONE. And that was all the claim of fraud that was brought against the medium.

Mr. SEARS. That was all.

Mr. RATHBONE. The advice proved to be correct, as decided by both courts.

Mr. SEARS. Yes.

Mr. RATHBONE. The money was recovered.

Mr. SEARS. The property was recovered.

Mr. REID. Does anybody else desire to ask questions?

Mr. HOUDINI. May I ask a question?

Mr. REID. Certainly.

Mr. HOUDINI. Do you say this lady practiced, either, amateurishly or professionally, as a medium?

Mr. SEARS. No. That was not in the trial at all.

Mr. REID. To whom are you referring?

Mr. HOUDINI. I am referring to Mrs. Hirons.

Do you know her to be a medium?

Mr. SEARS. Not to my knowledge. She practiced the art of mediumship in getting that transfer of property back, and that was the charge in the petition in the trial.

Mr. HOUDINI. Is this your signature on this paper I am now showing to you?

Mr. SEARS. Yes, sir; that is my signature.

Mr. HOUDINI. Then you are a little mistaken, if you are an attorney. We have some letters you did not know we had.

Mr. SEARS. Oh, yes; I did. I know all about it.

Mr. HOUDINI. I will read one line.

Mr. SEARS. I know all about it.

Mr. HOUDINI. It states:

I did not know, of course, only what you stated in your complaint and the information in the petition, but the whole matter convinced me of the justice of your cause, save and except the one point that I did not know anything about statements you had made to the effect that Mrs. Hirons pretended to be a medium and held communication with the spirit of the late Clara Barton.

Mr. SEARS. That is true. I did not know anything about that.

Mr. HOUDINI. I will put that in evidence.

Mr. REID. That is a fair lawyer's letter. Are there any more questions?

Mr. HOUDINI. I think that is all.

Mr. REID. Who is the next witness.

Mr. STRACK. I wish to make a little testimony.

Mr. REID. Have you testified before?

Mr. STRACK. I did this morning.

Mr. REID. Are there any witnesses here who have not testified? We want to give everybody a chance.

Mr. BLANTON. There is an important matter I would like to bring out from this lawyer.

Mr. REID. I will be very glad to have you enlighten the committee.

Mr. BLANTON. I asked you a question a while ago, and you did not seem to have any knowledge of it. In that case was not Clara Barton's nephew, Stephen E. Barton, connected with it?

Mr. SEARS. Yes; but that was another case.

Mr. BLANTON. Stephen E. Barton was connected with it

Mr. SEARS. Yes.

Mr. BLANTON. A case in which Mrs. Hiron was a party?

Mr. SEARS. I don't think it was Mrs. Hiron.

Mr. BLANTON. It was Stephen E. Barton?

Mr. SEARS. Yes; and he had a case against a lady.

Mr. BLANTON. Who was Stephen E. Barton's attorney?

Mr. SEARS. I think this Mr. Fenning.

Mr. BLANTON. Frederick A. Fenning?

Mr. SEARS. I think so.

Mr. REID. That might be interesting, but not important.

Mr. SEARS. No.

Mr. HAMMER. Mr. Chairman, do you not think it better to allot the time to each side?

Mr. REID. We have done pretty well for the last few minutes. Give us a few minutes more.

Mr. HAMMER. I thought the members of the committee had some say in this matter. I have always found, when you had a multitude of people and many wanted to testify, it would give better satisfaction to allot so much time to each side.

Mr. REID. You have been on committees before. Has not everybody been given a fair chance?

Mr. HAMMER. Yes; and never get through.

Mr. REID. Unless the chairman is overruled, we will proceed as rapidly as we can.

Mr. BLANTON. I think you make an admirable chairman.

Mr. REID. "Thank you for them kind words."

FURTHER STATEMENT OF REV. H. P. STRACK

Mr. STRACK. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, there have been repeated statements made before this committee about fraudulent mediumships, fraudulent practices of the mediums, and so forth. When the hearing was held before the Senate District Committee Mr. Houdini made the statement that he owned a church, that he had bought a church in Worcester, Mass. At that time I took exception to his statement, because I knew just how that church was obtained. You have not here heard Mr. Houdini say anything about his owning a church.

Mr. REID. We will ask him, if you want us to. Do you want us to ask him?

Mr. STRACK. I want to read this to the committee: "Massachusetts State Association of Spiritualists v. Harry Houdini and Frances Raud."

Mr. REID. What are you reading from?

Mr. STRACK. From the Banner of Light.

Mr. REID. What is that?

Mr. HOUDINI. A spiritualist newspaper.

Mr. REID. Are you attempting to disprove a fact by reading a newspaper article?

Mr. STRACK. I have a court decision.

Mr. REID. All right.

Mr. STRACK (reading):

A charter issued by the Massachusetts State Association of Spiritualists to a society in Worcester known as Unity Spiritualist Church, was obtained under false pretenses by an agent of Harry Houdini, one Frances Raud.

Mr. REID. So he did obtain it.

Mr. STRACK (reading):

This charter was presented to audiences in Worcester by Harry Houdini as his legal property, bought from the members of Unity Spiritualist Church for the sum of \$13. Counsel for the M. S. A. S., Samuel L. Bailen, at once entered a bill of complaint against Harry Houdini and Frances Raud. The following letter is explanatory.

MASSACHUSETTS ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS,

Care of Mrs. Emma B. Kaine, 175 Tremont Street, Boston, Mass.

DEAR MRS. KAINE: Please be advised that the justice sitting in the superior court in equity has this day entered a final decree in the case of Massachusetts State Association of Spiritualists v. Harry Houdini, reading as follows:

DECREE

This case came on to be further heard at this sitting of the court, and upon argument of counsel and thereupon, upon consideration thereof, it is hereby ordered adjudged and decreed

That the complainant herein is entitled to immediate possession of the charter referred to in the bill of complaint; that the respondents, Harry Houdini and Frances Raud be and hereby are ordered and directed to forthwith deliver over to the complainant the said charter.

Very truly yours,

S. L. BAILEN.

Mr. REID. Is that all of it?

Mr. STRACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. REID. You did not need to read it all. Do you say that is a good reply to a charge of fraudulent practice?

Mr. STRACK. Yes.

Mr. REID. We will take your word for that.

Mr. STRACK. The court made him return it. There is the decision of the court.

Mr. REID. Do you want to ask Mr. Houdini about it?

Mr. STRACK. I just wanted to bring to the attention of the committee the fact that accusations of false statements being made are not all on one side; that he himself does the same thing.

Mr. REID. So that is the way you want to refute his statement?

Mr. STRACK. I beg pardon.

Mr. REID. You think it is a good defense, when charged with making a false statement, to show that some one else made a false statement? That does not bear on anything in the bill.

Mr. STRACK. What I want to show is that the crimes are not all on one side.

Mr. REID. We will admit that there is crime enough to go round on both sides. Who is the next witness?

Mr. STRACK. Mr. Palmer wants to be heard.

Mr. REID. All right. Mr. Palmer, come forward and give your testimony.

STATEMENT OF E. C. PALMER

Mr. REID. Is your name Palmer?

Mr. PALMER. E. C. Palmer.

Mr. REID. Where do you live?

Mr. PALMER. 5608 Fourteenth Street NW.

Mr. REID. Your occupation.

Mr. PALMER. A despised Government clerk.

Mr. REID. In what department, so we may know the depth of your degradation.

Mr. PALMER. In the Pension Bureau.

Mr. REID. How long have you been confined there?

Mr. PALMER. The short period of 35 years.

Mr. REID. Do you wish to testify in regard to the bill?

Mr. PALMER. I do.

Mr. REID. All right. You may proceed.

Mr. PALMER. There has been a good deal said, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee, on this matter which has not had a real bearing upon the bill.

Mr. REID. That is customary.

Mr. PALMER. But it has been mighty entertaining. I have enjoyed it as well as the rest of them.

I want to say, Mr. Chairman, that I object to this bill, and that is what I am here for. First, in appearing here, I want you and the reporters to distinctly understand that I am neither a medium nor a member of any spiritualist church, nor am I a fortune teller nor any of the various persons who are referred to in this bill as "pretending" to do anything. I am a taxpayer of the District and a mere layman who has been hoping and believing for the greater part of my life in the comforting thought that my consciousness can go on living after my body, in which it has been cased, has worn out and liberated my consciousness, mind or soul, or whatever you wish to call it.

Mr. REID. That would be the only excuse I could see for staying in the Government service 35 years.

Mr. PALMER. I would be only too glad to get out if you would pass a retirement bill that would let me.

As leading up to my objections to this bill, I wish to say that I was first aroused on Tuesday when I read in the paper that Mr. Houdini had said the day before that "If there is one person more deluded than Dr. Conan Doyle it is Sir Oliver Lodge."

I have discovered in the short time that I have listened to Mr. Houdini that he makes lots of assertions, very few of which he probably can prove. That remark, if you will permit me to say so, is the remark of a consummate egotist.

Mr. REID. Of course, you are not going to compare the two.

MR. PALMER. No. It is the top height of egotistical ignorance for this man to say such a thing of the giant intellects of those two men, and he will have to include Sir William Crookes; Sir Arthur Balfour; Flammarion, the French astronomer; Doctor Lombroso, the Italian criminologist; the late Dr. Isaac Funk, founder and publisher of Funk & Wagnalls' dictionary; Dr. James H. Hyslop, of Columbia University; Hereward Carrington, Ph. D.; and many others of equal celebrity, who all spent from 10 to 40 years of exhaustive, cold, patient, scientific investigation in to spiritualism with the set determination to prove or disprove psychic phenomena and wound up by accepting the continuance of soul: life and its ability to manifest itself to our senses as a proved fact.

MR. REID. Are you summing up against the witness, or are you going to testify about the bill?

MR. PALMER. I am going to come to the bill.

MR. REID. All right. You talk about the bill and we will take care of the witness.

MR. PALMER. Now, this man comes here to try to get you gentlemen to sponsor and attempt to fasten upon us citizens a law which would supersede the one we already have.

MR. REID. We will be pretty careful to see that they do not hoodwink us.

MR. PALMER. And with which those who are taxed under its terms have expressed themselves as satisfied, although it taxes them for exercising a faculty with which God has endowed them, and would supersede this law by one in which these folks would be penalized and branded as criminals if they should indulge in their God-given faculty any more for money. That is this law. Why prohibit the fortune telling?

MR. REID. Do you believe in it?

MR. PALMER. No. Why prohibit fortune telling, or any of the rest of the things enumerated in this bill? No one patronizes a fortune teller or a palmist except of his or her own free will.

MR. REID. That is true of lawyers and doctors, is it not?

MR. PALMER. Yes. I thought at first you said "liar," and I remembered that some one said that lawyers and liars were pretty much the same, but I don't believe it.

MR. REID. I can understand how your experience in life has demonstrated that to you.

MR. PALMER. That is right. I have never yet gone to a fortune teller or a palm reader. I have been accosted by these despicable gypsies several times as I have passed their gaudy doors, but I have never gone over the portal of any of them. To me it would be a piece of folly to do so, but if some one else wants to blow in his money on that folly it is his business, not mine, and, in my opinion, not yours.

MR. REID. You do not mean that, do you?

MR. PALMER. I do.

MR. REID. If a fellow wants to eat dope, he can do it? If he wants to commit any other crime, he can do it?

MR. PALMER. No. Those are crimes. The fortune-teller's practice of sharpness and deceit is not immoral in its effect on those who go to them for fun or for any other reason.

Mr. REID. You do not commend that as reflecting your 35 years in Government service, I hope.

Mr. PALMER. There are some things I would like to commend and some things I don't want to commend. Hence there is no particular reason why, in my opinion, even these fortune tellers should be prohibited instead of taxed. As a taxpayer, I might say that if you supersede the present law, by which these people pay for their rights and their privileges, it simply means that much more tax upon the general tax-burdened people.

Mr. REID. You do not think the people of Washington would object to the little additional tax, do you?

Mr. PALMER. No. I don't object to it. You have been putting it on until my taxes are more than double what they were 10 years ago.

Mr. REID. Mr. Blanton will tell you that Washington has lower taxes than any other city in the country.

Mr. PALMER. Yes; but he does not know everything about it.

Mr. REID. Oh, yes. He knows a good deal.

Mr. PALMER. The objectionable part of the present law is that it taxes the genuine psychic, sensitive or spirit medium the same as it taxes these Gypsy charlatans and thieves.

Mr. REID. How you going to tell them apart?

Mr. PALMER. The objectionable part of this proposed bill is that it will stifle and shut off the good manifestations of the genuine psychics while shutting off the charlatans and mountebanks, or "fakes," as they have been called here in the elegant diction of the gentleman who sponsors the bill.

Now, I want to know if you have any right to do that for the people of this District when so large a number of us object to it on the ground that it will withhold from use the satisfaction of having personal proof that the souls or spirits of our loved ones who have passed on can come to us through certain channels and bring us comfort and that our own spirits will live on through the ages.

I heard the statement yesterday of the honorable Representative from New York, Mr. Bloom, made in an equivocal way, that this bill would not interfere with the religious belief and method of worship of spiritualists, but don't you believe the assertion; I don't. It has been asserted by several, but I know just how it will work. Our already over-burdened policemen, over-burdened with a thousand and one traffic rules, bootlegger responsibilities and real criminal laws and regulations, to enforce which is now puzzling them so they don't know whether they are standing on their heads or on their feet, can not make those fine, hair-splitting distinctions which you gentlemen, who are so capable in defining that you often originate laws which we men who are charged with the duty of construing are hard put to it to know what you really meant.

Mr. REID. Are you talking about your experience in the Pension Office?

Mr. PALMER. Yes.

Mr. REID. Do you come before a committee of Congress and tell them you can not interpret the laws which they pass, in your official capacity; do you want that in the record here? Do you want it in the record that you are testifying in public here that Congressmen make laws that you men in the Pension Office can not interpret?

Mr. PALMER. I did not say that. I did not say "can not interpret." I said we were hard put to it to know what you really meant.

Mr. REID. Is it up to you to finally determine that?

Mr. PALMER. It is up to some of us.

Mr. REID. That is a terrible indictment of Congress, if you can not understand it.

Mr. PALMER. These policemen, being unable to see the difference as you may, will be often raiding the homes of people who have otherwise been good, law-abiding citizens, and yanking them into court to be fined and scolded, and warned not to again exercise that gift of psychic power with which they have been endowed. It seems to me it is merely one more step in the direction of infringement on personal liberty, of which so much has been said of late.

Mr. REID. Are you for or against the dry amendment?

Mr. PALMER. I am for the dry amendment, so far as my personal habits are concerned.

Mr. REID. And you say there has been much complaint about it.

Mr. PALMER. Yes; there has been a great deal of complaint of the infringement on personal liberty. It looks to me like this is another step in the same direction.

Mr. HAMMER. Would you go so far as to stop the barrooms and brothels, if people want to patronize them?

Mr. PALMER. I would, because they are criminal, and produce criminals. These people are not criminals, and do not produce criminals, and there is the difference.

Mr. HAMMER. Do barrooms produce criminals?

Mr. PALMER. Do barrooms produce criminals, did you say?

Mr. HAMMER. I asked you that.

Mr. PALMER. Yes; I certainly think they do, and they have produced lots of them. So far as I am concerned, not a drop of liquor has ever passed my lips, and I am not ashamed to say it. I am proud to say it, and I don't care who knows it.

Mr. REID. This is certainly a wet crowd. You did not get much of a hand on that.

Mr. PALMER. I see. I guess it is.

Mr. Bloom read into the record yesterday a city ordinance of Hartford, Conn., which brands the council of that city as a pack of fanatics. I can not believe that the Congress of the United States will put themselves in that category, even if brother Houdini has placed himself there and dragged Honorable Mr. Bloom with him.

Now, lastly, I object to this bill if it will hamper in any manner the appearance in this city of a friend of mine, who will present to us the opportunity to enjoy the most convincing proof of the continuity of soul-life beyond the grave that has been seen here in years, if ever. I mean convincing to doubting Thomases, not necessarily the best proof to believing spiritualists, but the most remarkable from a visual standpoint. In my judgment, he will have a good chance of getting Mr. Houdini's \$10,000 that he so dramatically spread upon the table the other day.

Mr. REID. I won \$10,000 from him, and he never paid it.

Mr. PALMER. I shall have my friend here before next fall. He is used as the instrument for materializations which Mr. Houdini can not imitate as he imitated slate writing yesterday.

Mr. REID. Did he do something on a slate?

Mr. PALMER. Mr. Houdini is a sharp man, a capable man, and all that sort of thing. My friend is a genuine psychic, not a trickster.

Mr. REID. How do you know the difference? That is what I want to know.

Mr. PALMER. Every man should find that out for himself, which he can not afford to neglect doing.

Mr. REID. Is that the test?

Mr. PALMER. That is the test.

Mr. REID. All right.

Mr. PALMER. This man is going to be here. He has been a business man in Los Angeles for years, and he was born in this city. He is about Mr. Houdini's age; and he never had an inkling of the power within him until about five years ago; five years ago to-day; as a matter of fact; and since then he has developed the power, or the power has been developed in him, of producing figures, or rather, of what they call materialization of spirit forms.

Mr. REID. Do you think anybody ought to seriously object to the provisions of this bill?

Mr. PALMER. Why not?

Mr. REID. Here is what this bill says:

Any person pretending to tell fortunes; where lost or stolen goods may be found; any person who, by game or device, sleight-of-hand, pretending, fortune-telling, or by any other trick or other means, by the use of cards or other implements or instruments, fraudently obtains from another person property of any description; any person pretending to remove spells, or to sell charms for protection, or to unite the separated, shall be considered a disorderly person.

Mr. PALMER. Well, Mr. Chairman——

Mr. REID. Wait a minute.

Mr. PALMER. All right.

Mr. REID. Mr. Hammer wants to ask you a question.

Mr. PALMER. All right.

Mr. HAMMER. How does that affect palmistry?

Mr. PALMER. It would not affect palmistry in any particular, in my opinion. We already have a law to punish anybody who obtains property fraudulently in any manner, way, shape, or form.

Mr. REID. Do you believe anybody can remove spells? Do you think anybody ought to sell charms for protection?

Mr. PALMER. That, my dear sir, is a question that does not affect spiritualism, any more than it affects Catholics, or any more than it affects me as a Methodist.

Mr. REID. Are you a Methodist?

Mr. PALMER. Yes.

Mr. REID. You are a Methodist and a dry, and I am a Methodist and a dry.

Mr. PALMER. Yes.

Mr. REID. We ought to get along together.

Mr. PALMER. I am a Methodist and a dry, and I am glad you are both.

Mr. REID. I want to get a common ground for us.

Mr. PALMER. As a good Methodist, I object to that clause about selling charms.

Mr. REID. You do not believe in that, do you? John Wesley would turn over in his grave if he thought Methodists were advocating such a thing as that.

Mr. PALMER. It affects Catholics in their profession of faith.

Mr. REID. What about the separating? Uniting the separated?

Mr. PALMER. I believe——

Mr. REID. That is a provision of the bill?

Mr. PALMER. Yes.

Mr. REID. And you are talking to the bill?

Mr. PALMER. Yes.

Mr. REID. And you are roasting Houdini?

Mr. PALMER. Yes. I tried to roast him last winter when he showed here at the Belasco Theater. No; I didn't roast him. I simply asked him some questions, because I thought he was a well-posted man.

Mr. REID. Was he?

Mr. PALMER. I have seen better posted men, but he is pretty good.

Mr. RATHBONE. I was particularly interested in that part of your statement that gave a list of names of prominent men who believe in spiritualism. I can only recall some of them. I would like to ask you upon what you have based that statement? Have you read any books? Are you able to state any books they have written upon the subject? Take such a man as Lombroso.

Mr. REID. What did he do?

Mr. RATHBONE. He was a great criminologist, one of the greatest criminologists in the world.

Mr. REID. Oh, I see.

Mr. RATHBONE. Has he ever written anything upon spiritualism, or anything that deals with spiritualism?

Mr. PALMER. I have read one of his articles on the subject.

Mr. RATHBONE. I would be interested in knowing it. I did not know he had ever done so.

Mr. PALMER. Yes. As for Dr. Hereward Carrington, I read his book. Some years ago he was as strong an opponent as you could get of anything concerning psychic phenomena and spirit mediums and all those things. In a book he has written at a later date he says that having investigated all those things, he has become convinced of the fact that they are true, that there can be such manifestations made.

Mr. RATHBONE. If you are able to give me a reference to any of those articles, I will be very glad to have them.

Mr. PALMER. Mr. Rathbone, I will send you some of the articles.

Mr. RATHBONE. I wish you would.

Mr. REID. Mr. Houdini wants to ask you a question.

Mr. HOUDINI. May I give the witness a little information, in case he has not read the book, and if there is any book he can mention I would like to explain it to him.

Mr. REID. All right. Ask him questions.

Mr. HOUDINI. Regarding Sir William Crookes, he was one of the greatest men of all times, but he was completely mystified by a little blonde lady.

Mr. REID. Ah!

Mr. HOUDINI. She fooled him in a dark room with a galvanometer, and in 1876 he refused to speak about it. Mr. Funk was a very brilliant man.

Mr. REID. Is he the fellow that has the dictionary?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes. He wrote the "Widow's Mite."

Mr. PALMER. Yes. I have that book.

Mr. HOUDINI. Any medium could fool Mr. Funk, because he is what is known in the vernacular as a "shut-eye."

Mr. REID. A what?

Mr. HOUDINI. A "shut-eye."

Mr. REID. What is that?

Mr. HOUDINI. A "shut-eye" is one who believes everything any medium tells him or her. An "open-eye" is one who is a trickster and know it. A good many people believe in it, and I respect them. I take off my hat to the "shut-eyes," but those who are open eyed and know they are tricksters are the ones that I am attacking.

Mr. REID. Were these all shut-eyes?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes, with the exception of the last named by Mr. Palmer.

Mr. REID. All right. Go ahead.

Mr. HOUDINI. Lombroso was completely fooled by Paladino. My private secretary, John W. Sargent, and Joseph A. Ring, a Columbia College student, completely exposed him in New York City.

Hyslop was fooled. He was a gentleman and a scholar, but he was not qualified to examine any medium. You get any of his books and sit down with me, and I will tear every medium to pieces. Carrington is on the committee with me on the Scientific American. Carrington is a hacker.

Mr. REID. A what?

Mr. HOUDINI. A hacker.

Mr. PALMER. Another English term.

Mr. REID. What is a hacker?

Mr. HOUDINI. A hacker takes other peoples' books and writes a book with a pair of scissors. He bought a doctor of philosophy's diploma in Oskaloosa, and five days ago the man who sold it to him was arrested by the Government. He committed suicide, Mr. McLennan. He killed his wife and child, for selling those to Carrington.

Mr. REID. Do you want to ask any more questions.

Mr. HOUDINI. You admit that, while I am not well posted, I know a good deal about the subject?

Mr. PALMER. Yes, I admit it.

Mr. HOUDINI. You say there are no crimes committed. Do you know how many crimes have been committed in a dark room where a male or female medium has one of the opposite sex in the room for hours? Here is a list of crimes committed under the guise of spiritualism, with the headline "Spiritualist cause two killings." I don't want to read it.

Mr. REID. Do you think it is all right for the committee to read?

Mr. HOUDINI. I don't want to take too much time.

Mr. REID. Examine them, Judge Hammer, if they are all right for the committee to read.

Proceed, Mr. Houdini.

Mr. HOUDINI. You have named these scientists. Do they sell lucky charms?

Mr. PALMER. I don't think they do.

Mr. REID (to Houdini). Are you testifying or asking a question?

Mr. HOUDINI. I say they were good men, but they were deluded. They were all fooled, except Carrington, and he is a trickster.

Mr. REID. Who is Carrington?

Mr. PALMER. Mr. Houdini, whom have you heard say these scientific men were deluded?

Mr. HOUDINI. Arthur Conan Doyle stated that I possess psychic powers.

Mr. PALMER. I presume you do.

Mr. HOUDINI. Certainly not. You were roasting me. Do not compliment me. I wish I did. These scientists claim I do, but it is not so.

Mr. REID. He may not have psychic powers, but he has a lot of nerve.

Mr. HOUDINI. They do not bring back the dead. They believe in it. I respect those gentlemen.

Mr. PALMER. They are like me. I can't do it.

Mr. HOUDINI. I respect those men, because they are shut-eyes. That is all.

Mr. REID. Any further questions?

Mr. PALMER. I would like to ask Mr. Houdini if he ever went to Los Angeles after he and I had that talk last winter, to see this man Johnson, the psychic there of whom I told him at that time.

Mr. HOUDINI. No. But may I tell you for your information, if you will bring him to Washington, with your permission I will tell you how he does it.

Mr. PALMER. I am not going to have Mr. Johnson here or his wife. They work it together. Mrs. Johnson died on the 26th of February, 1925, and Mr. Johnson is now 72 or 73 years old and has given up active work. But a friend of mine who was born in this city that I told you about and told the committee about is coming here, although it was only five years ago to-day for the first time that he went to a seance conducted by Mr. and Mrs. Johnson in Los Angeles, he being a business man, not a believer, and very strongly against it, as strongly against it as you are now. When he went the second time he was simply taken off his feet, and he became a strong believer, and he wrote to me. He and I have corresponded right along and, with your permission, I will read a little selection from one of his letters.

Mr. REID. All right. We will hear what the spirits say.

Mr. PALMER. They can't hurt you if they are that far away.

Mr. HOUDINI. Was Johnson a witness in a famous case in California?

Mr. PALMER. No.

Mr. HOUDINI. You know Johnson was in jail?

Mr. PALMER. No.

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes; 60 days.

Mr. PALMER. My friend never went to jail! You said you thought Johnson was the man who had materialization. I told you that there were materializations of figures, and sometimes eight or ten people in the room with Mr. Johnson, sitting in plain sight with a

lamp or electric light to see; that there were as many as eight or ten different spirits of different sizes, girls no taller than this and men as tall as this who came in there. You suggested that he must have done that by means of confederates. I wrote to my friend and asked him, because he was the first president of the Los Angeles Society for Psychic Research; he becoming such after having been to see these manifestations through Mr. and Mrs. Johnson. I asked him if what you said was true, and his answer was, "No."

Mr. HOUDINI. Does he sell lucky charms?

Mr. PALMER. No.

Mr. HOUDINI. Does he tell the future?

Mr. PALMER. No. He is a business man.

Mr. HOUDINI. I am talking about the bill.

Mr. REID. Let us hear what Mr. Johnson has to say.

Mr. PALMER. It is not Mr. Johnson's letter; it is my friend's letter. He said:

Mrs. Johnson passed away February 16 last, 1925. Mr. Johnson's health is failing. He is past 70 and has discontinued all his materialization work. There is no doubt—

And he undoubtedly knows—

about the genuineness of the Johnson seances and never has been. The Los Angeles society has a record of more than 200 genuine materializations from the Johnsons alone.

Mr. REID. That letter is not from Johnson, but somebody telling about him?

Mr. PALMER. That is from the first president of the society and my friend of whom I spoke, and who only five years ago knew for the first time Mr. Johnson.

Mr. HAMMER. You speak of these persons, Mr. Johnson and others, having power which you do not possess.

Mr. PALMER. Yes.

Mr. HAMMER. And which I do not possess.

Mr. PALMER. Yes.

Mr. HAMMER. That power must be a divine power.

Mr. PALMER. Do we not all possess a part of the divine power? Isn't all life a spark of the divine life, Mr. Hammer?

Mr. HAMMER. If I have power to foretell the future and define things the average man is not able to do, it is divine power.

Mr. PALMER. Yes.

Mr. HAMMER. Divine afflatus. It is the power of God.

Mr. PALMER. Sure. That is what we all get. Our sense of reasoning power comes from that.

Mr. HAMMER. Do you not think a just God would not be such a respecter of persons as not to communicate that to some of our great and influential men, say the Secretary of State or the President, or our great learned preachers or college professors?

Mr. REID. Or members of this committee?

Mr. HAMMER. Or the chairman of this committee? How do you explain that some people arrogate these powers to themselves and do not give the credit to the divine power?

Mr. PALMER. So far as I know, they do not arrogate anything to themselves. I think all of us are different. I don't claim for myself, and don't claim that anybody else is born with exactly the same

kind of nerves, the same sort of nerves, exactly the same sized organs, internal organs.

Mr. HAMMER. If they are so born they do not remain so long.

Mr. PALMER. Every individual internally is as different as they are externally. There is no doubt about that. God, in the creation of individuals, makes a difference.

Mr. REID. That is what makes life worth living.

Mr. PALMER. That is right. It does. And that is what makes some very useful, like yourself.

Mr. REID. Thank you. Is that all you wish to say?

Mr. PALMER. Yes.

Mr. REID. You may be excused. Call the next witness.

STATEMENT OF C. LARIMORE KEELEY

Mr. REID. Please state your name.

Miss KEELEY. C. Larimore Keeley.

Mr. REID. What is your occupation?

Miss KEELEY. I am an attorney, practicing in the city.

Mr. REID. Proceed with your statement.

Miss KEELEY. I am here in the place of Mr. Willett, who appeared this morning for a number of people, including Mrs. Brewer, whose activities were brought in question. I want to call the attention of the committee to certain phases of this bill, without going into the question of whether spiritualism or palmistry are covered.

Mr. REID. Are you a spiritualist?

Miss KEELEY. I am not.

Mr. REID. Are you a palmist?

Miss KEELEY. I am not.

Mr. REID. You are just a lawyer.

Miss KEELEY. A mere lawyer.

Mr. REID. Appearing in your official capacity?

Miss KEELEY. Yes.

Mr. REID. Are you being paid for it?

Miss KEELEY. No, I have not been paid for it yet.

Mr. REID. Are you doing it for the good of the cause?

Miss KEELEY. I am doing it for the good of the people of the District of Columbia, I hope.

Mr. REID. We will attest that by finding out whether you are in your official capacity.

Miss KEELEY. I am doing it as an attorney in behalf of the palmists, but merely for the purpose of bringing out the facts about this particular bill.

Mr. REID. All right. Proceed.

Miss KEELEY. The first clause of the bill is unintelligible unless the word "or" is inserted between the words "fortune" and "where."

Mr. REID. Judge Gilbert, will you see if that point is well taken?

Mr. RATHBONE. Were you present this morning?

Miss KEELEY. No, sir.

Mr. RATHBONE. I think that was covered this morning.

Mr. HAMMER. I think "as to" was intended to be in there. That is evidently what was meant.

Miss KEELEY. The second clause of the bill relates to subjects for which there is adequate existing legislation except as to "pretending" and "fortune telling." So read, the subjects which are the objects of the bill's condemnation are:

1. Pretending to tell fortunes.
2. Pretending to tell where lost or stolen goods may be found.
3. By pretending, to fraudulently obtain property.
4. By fortune telling, to fraudulently obtain property.
5. Pretending to remove spells.
6. Pretending to sell charms for protection.
7. Pretending to unite the separated.

Those are the parts of the bill that are not already quite adequately covered by legislation. The question in my mind and in the minds of the people whom I am here to represent is whether or not this particular bill as drawn will accomplish what this committee apparently intends it to accomplish.

Mr. REID. Do you mean that the bill intends to accomplish?

Miss KEELEY. Yes.

Mr. REID. There has been no expression by the committee as I understand it.

Miss KEELEY. I should have said "the bill." We will consider these in their order, but first observe that, with the exception of Nos. 3 and 4, the condemnation of the bill is directed wholly against "pretending," whether for a consideration or not, whether by holding out to the public as a profession or in private for amusement, and without regard to the question whether the pretence was relied upon by anybody else, or whether or not such "pretending" resulted in loss or damage to any person. The language of the bill would apparently apply equally to the play of children, the amusement of adults, or the credulity of those who have learned to rely upon premonition and presentiment, of whom there are many.

Mr. REID. You do not mean that.

Miss KEELEY. Yes; there are many in comparison to the whole.

1. Pretending to tell fortunes, or the telling of fortunes, would include the old game of apple seeds, the tea grounds in the cup, and many other practices. If it be understood to relate to future happenings, affecting the lives of persons, so as to embrace all foretelling then it will apply to the prognosis of the physician, forecasts of the weather, predictions of the state of the markets, and whether or not she will be happily married. If we are to be condemned, and fined, and imprisoned for pretending, at least we ought to know what sort of pretense it is that we are condemned for.

2. Pretending to tell where lost or stolen goods may be found is to be made an offense; so that to swear out a search warrant would itself be in violation of the language of the bill; unless the bill is actually intended to convey only a limited meaning which its framers did not see fit to mention.

3. To obtain property fraudulently by pretending. But what is "pretending," standing alone and unless explained. Pretending what? If it relates to future matters, then the clause is repugnant, for it has long been established that one can not well be defrauded by statements as to things to happen in the future, since one man's guess is as good as another's.

4. To obtain property fraudulently by fortune telling presents a knotty problem. If the statements of the fortune teller relate to past or present facts, then there is already legislation to cover it. If the statements relate to future matters only, then this clause falls within the situation discussed in No. 3.

5. Pretending to remove spells, and pretending to sell charms for protection, are matters, so far as they are understood, with which my clients are not especially concerned. It is understood that some persons, of whom there are a few, suffer the delusion of being under a "spell," and seem to believe that certain "charms" will remove the spell. If this legislation could be limited to those cases in which money is obtained from persons thus afflicted, it might be well, but this language seems to cover even the innocent practices of large classes of certain religious orders.

I think I should say here that I quite agree with the gentlemen who preceded me, that that particular section of the bill would affect a number of religious faiths.

Mr. REID. What religious creeds would it affect?

Miss KEELEY. It undoubtedly would affect the Catholic Church, as well as many others.

Mr. REID. How would it?

Miss KEELEY. Because that church does have charms for protection. When I say that, I should also say that I am not a Catholic and I am not representing them.

Mr. REID. You would not say that if you were a Catholic?

Miss KEELEY. I come of Catholic people. I know something about what they have. And it does affect not only that but other churches; but I think it affects that particular church perhaps more than the others. If it does even to that extent affect any religion, then, of course, it is in violation of our constitutional rights.

Pretending to unite the separated is a large pretense. There is no explanation in the bill as to how or when that is done, or anything limiting it in any way. Is it the separated in life, or the separated in death? I am not expressing an opinion as to my personal belief, but there might be an objection to pretending to join the living with those who have passed on. There might not be an objection to trying to bring together those on earth. The bill does not say what is intended.

It is submitted that the obvious failure of the framers of this bill to state in clear language, such as befits a piece of criminal legislation, exactly what it is that is condemned, is only another proof of what many have thought, namely, that the whole field of psychic phenomena is still so far a mystery that not even those who pretend to understand it can be trusted to frame a single prohibition upon human conduct in that field which will stand the test of logical analysis or serve as a useful guide in human affairs.

That is, it is a subject upon which legislation ought not to be attempted in this form. A regulation, yes. We now have regulation. Since 1902 we have had a law governing such things in the District of Columbia. It is my understanding, and I may again be in error, because I have not appeared here before, that no members of the police force have testified before your committee. If that is true, it seems to me that before this bill or any similar bill could be ap-

proved or receive the favorable report of this committee, it would be necessary to examine some of the police who have direct supervision over these very individuals.

Mr. REID. You heard the preceding witness say it would be too much work for the policemen if this bill passed? You would not expect them to come up here to get more work, would you?

Miss KEELEY. I am not afraid of burdening them. If this is of such importance as to require criminal legislation as drastic as this would be, then we can well afford to see to it that the police fulfill their duty in that respect. I know personally that the police are familiar with the palmists in their precincts; that they do know what they are doing; and that from time to time they take them to task because they have not kept within bounds, and if they have not, their licenses can be revoked. If they do not observe the rules and regulations of the police department with respect to their particular practice their license would be revoked or a renewal would not be given to them.

Now, in behalf of the palmists, I am not here to say they should not be regulated. I heartily approve of very rigid regulation, but my thought is, and I want to urge it upon the committee, that this particular bill will not accomplish what apparently the framer of the bill intended that it should accomplish. The word "fraudulent" leaves the bill open to a number of interpretations. If you take the case of a fortuneteller, she may foretell that five years from now a certain thing will occur. The question is, how can you determine when, if ever, her representation is fraudulent. You can not tell whether it is going to happen until the period of time has elapsed. It does not matter what your opinion or my opinion may be.

Mr. REID. Do they not prosecute and convict persons under the postal law for pretending to tell what will happen in the future?

Miss KEELEY. Under the postal law; yes, sir.

Mr. REID. Applying the same reasoning to your local conditions in the District of Columbia, without regard to the postal law, would you undertake to say that the postal law, in relation to the use of the mails, would be any different fundamentally than that which would be applied to the District of Columbia under this law?

Miss KEELEY. I would say the phraseology of the postal law and this bill are different.

Mr. REID. It says "fraudulent."

Miss KEELEY. Yes. I have no objection to that, but there should be a limitation to it.

Mr. REID. There is none in the postal law.

Mr. HAMMER. There must be a plan or scheme to defraud.

Miss KEELEY. In reading this bill, it does not say so.

Mr. REID. She is objecting to the use of the word "fraudulent," and that protects her most.

Miss KEELEY. Without the limitation.

Mrs. JANE COATES. Mr. Chairman, I handed the chairman this morning a paper. I had also requested him to call the superintendent of police and let him speak for himself. I thought it was only fair to have Major Hesse come.

Mr. REID. Do you want him here? I will have him called.

Mrs. COATES. I wish you would. I handed Mr. McLeod the paper, showing where a good many mediums had been taken out of the business for fraudulent practices, and two are already in jail, showing the Metropolitan police are quite on the job.

Mr. REID. I am glad to hear somebody boosting the police

Mrs. COATES. They have always done their duty, as far as I am concerned.

Mr. HOUDINI. That shows there are fraudulent mediums.

Mrs. COATES. He says everything is fraudulent.

Mr. HOUDINI. I can prove it.

Mr. RATHBONE. Miss Keeley, as a lawyer, I would like to get your view about this. Is it your opinion that palmistry is included in this bill at all?

Miss KEELEY. I would say offhand that it is.

Mr. REID. Is that offhand in the sense of palmistry?

Miss KEELEY. If you would change this particular bill, do you mean?

Mr. RATHBONE. It does not seem to me that palmistry is in this bill at all. That is my opinion. I will tell you why, and when I want to get your view. Beginning with line 7 the bill says:

Any person pretending to tell fortunes where lost or stolen goods may be found; any person who, by game or device, sleight of hand, pretending, fortune telling, or by any trick or other means, by the use of cards, or other implements or instruments, fraudulently obtains from another property of any description.

Now, palmistry is not mentioned, and I do not think that language applies to palmistry. I think the principle of law would govern that where specific words are used in the beginning, the terms that follow must also be regarded as specific. That is correct, is it not? Is that a right principle of construction?

Miss KEELEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. RATHBONE. It says "Any person who, by game or device, sleight of hand, pretending, fortune telling, or by any trick or other means, by the use of cards or other implements or instruments, fraudulently obtains from another person property of any description." It specifies those particular things. If it was intended to include palmistry, it would have to mention it. Having mentioned other things and not mentioning palmistry, palmistry would not be included. Is that not the law?

Miss KEELEY. I think the words "fortune telling" would include palmistry.

Mr. REID. You think it would include palmistry?

Miss KEELEY. I think it would. If it does, that is what we want to have brought out.

Mr. REID. Do you want us to put "palmistry" in there?

Miss KEELEY. No; I don't want it in there.

Mr. REID. Just add the word "palmistry."

Miss KEELEY. No. That is not what I want.

Mr. RATHBONE. You are a lawyer, and I want to get your view. You think palmistry is in this bill because of the words "fortune telling"?

Miss KEELEY. I would say so.

Mr. RATHBONE. Fortune telling might be done in a good many ways.

Miss KEELEY. Yes, sir. Palmistry is merely one.

Mr. RATHBONE. Then, having specified a number of them, games, sleight of hand, etc., if palmistry were to be in there, would it not have to be specifically mentioned? If that were to be the kind of fortune telling the bill has in view, it ought to mention it specifically, ought it not? As a lawyer, you recognize that, do you not?

Miss KEELEY. It ought to mention it.

Mr. RATHBONE. If it does not mention it, it probably would not be in the contemplation of the bill.

Miss KEELEY. Not necessarily.

Mr. REID. In order to clarify it, I will consider a motion to amend the bill by inserting the word "palmistry."

Mr. RATHBONE. I expressed my opinion this morning very frankly that this bill, as long as we are taking up specific language, is not even grammatical as drafted.

Miss KEELEY. That is the thing I called to your attention in the beginning.

Mr. RATHBONE. It is so loose in its language that we would not think of reporting the bill in the form it is in even if we happened to agree on the principle of it.

Mr. HAMMER. That is a colloquialism. I never saw it in a bill before. "Tell fortunes where lost." It means "as to" where lost.

Miss KEELEY. So I have been informed.

Mr. HAMMER. Evidently that is what is meant.

Miss KEELEY. Yes.

Mr. HAMMER. When it comes down to fortune telling, I do not see where it is necessary to put palmistry in the bill. It says "by the use of cards or other implements or instruments." Now, these other implements or instruments or other devices are covered by these words. Do you not think that is what that means?

Mr. RATHBONE. That is what I think. And palmistry is not mentioned. So I do not think the bill applies to palmistry.

Mr. HAMMER. Is not palmistry a kind of fortune telling?

Miss KEELEY. The word "or" intervenes there.

Mr. HAMMER. Is not palmistry a kind of fortune telling? It says "implements or instruments." Therefore, I think it would be included.

Miss KEELEY. My understanding is that palmistry is included.

Mr. REID. That makes it all clear.

Miss KEELEY. My understanding is that it is included. I say the bill is very ambiguous, as drawn.

Mr. HAMMER. Evidently.

Miss KEELEY. And I say it is covered by present legislation, except the very few parts that I have pointed out. The question is whether or not, with the legislation already provided for by the law of 1902, we do not already have sufficient protection, and whether this law will give to the District of Columbia the sort of protection that the framer of this bill intended to give us. Our belief is that this bill is far afield from what the framer intended. That is the interpretation of this language.

Mr. HAMMER. Do you think we ought to prohibit or restrict gambling devices?

Miss KEELEY. That is already done under subchapter 5.

Mr. HAMMER. Do you think we ought to do it?

Miss KEELEY. Yes.

Mr. HAMMER. Then why not include fortune telling?

Miss KEELEY. I say you are not doing it under this bill. You are permitting it.

Mr. REID. You have more of a chance in fortune telling.

Miss KEELEY. That may be.

Mr. HAMMER. I am just asking your opinion.

Miss KEELEY. My thought about it is that it is just a section to be added to subchapter 5. It seeks to regulate them, but it would not have the effect of regulating them in the manner in which the framer apparently intended it. Subchapter 5 prohibits the very doing of certain things. In States where legislation similar to the proposed law has been had, it has amounted to a positive prohibition. Such a law would be properly added to subchapter 5, but the proposed law is neither prohibitive nor properly regulative in its phraseology.

Mr. GILBERT. What do you say to this? This bill provides a punishment for any person pretending to unite the separated.

Miss KEELEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. GILBERT. Suppose a husband or wife were considering a suit for divorce, one or the other, and the lawyer pretended to unite them. Would he be guilty under this bill of fraudulent practice?

Miss KEELEY. Under a strict construction of the bill.

Mr. GILBERT. "Any person pretending to remove spells or unite the separated shall be called a disorderly person."

Mrs. COATES. If Roman Catholics can pray your soul out of purgatory, why can not the spiritualists pray you out of hell?

Mr. HOUDINI. Do they sell lucky charms?

Mrs. COATES. No.

Mr. REID. Let us proceed with this witness.

Miss KEELEY. My thought was just that the bill is ambiguous.

Mr. GILBERT. I think it is undoubtedly true that the bill is entirely too inclusive. It includes some harmless undertakings.

Miss KEELEY. That is our objection to it. I say the bill does not properly cover these things.

Mr. GILBERT. Your argument is against the form of the bill.

Miss KEELEY. Yes.

Mr. RATHBONE. Do you think that what you would consider as a legitimate and proper practice of palmistry needs further legislation in order to protect it?

Miss KEELEY. I think not.

Mr. RATHBONE. Have you any suggestions that you think ought to be incorporated in the bill, whether this bill or another one, for the further regulation of palmistry, in addition to the existing law?

Miss KEELEY. The only thing I would have to suggest would be higher license fees, which would keep out the riff-raff, and a rigid compliance with present police regulations.

Mr. HOUDINI. I would like to give the lady a little information.

Miss KEELEY. Have I answered your question, Congressman?

Mr. HOUDINI. This is no question. Were you aware of the fact that the spiritualists here have sold my investigators thousands of dollars' worth of charms, and at the present time there are a number here, and they went as high as to ask for \$500 to find a sweetheart and bring him back?

Mr. REID. It is worth that to get a sweetheart back. [Laughter.]

Miss KEELEY. I am not particularly interested with what the testimony here has been. I understand that the spiritualists whom I represent have testified or are willing to testify. I am here to urge that the police testify here as to conditions. They are the ones——

Mr. REID (interposing). We will call the police.

Miss KEELEY. And that this particular phraseology is not appropriate.

Mr. REID. We agree with you there. Who is next?

STATEMENT OF MADAME GRACE MARCIA

Mr. REID. Will you state your name?

Madame MARCIA. My name is Grace Marcia. My profession is astrologer. My address is 1445 U Street NW., Washington, D. C.

Mr. REID. How long have you lived in Washington?

Madame MARCIA. Twenty years.

Mr. REID. How long have you been an astrologer?

Madame MARCIA. Thirty-four years.

Mr. REID. You were an astrologer before you came to Washington, were you?

Madame MARCIA. Yes, sir.

Mr. HAMMER. Flammarion's name has been mentioned, the renowned French astronomer, Camille Flammarion. Is your husband akin to him?

Madame MARCIA. My husband is his own cousin.

Mr. REID. Does that help some?

Madame MARCIA. No.

Mr. HAMMER. Are you related to Lord Berwick?

Mr. REID. Who is Lord Berwick?

Mr. HAMMER. He is the lord of Berwick Castle.

Mr. REID. In North Carolina?

Mr. HAMMER. Oh, no.

Madame MARCIA. Will you allow me to ask you a question, Mr. Hammer?

Mr. HAMMER. Certainly.

Madame MARCIA. What have my antecedents or my relations to any one to do with this?

Mr. HAMMER. I just simply wanted to ask that question.

Madame MARCIA. Thank you. I do not live on my relatives. They are not fond of bowing down and saying, "Lady Marcia."

Mr. REID. I could easily see how they could.

Madame MARCIA. Thank you very much, Mr. Reid. They do not. I just asked for a few moments to read this and have it injected into the proceedings. It is just a short statement.

Mr. REID. Might I ask if you have testified before?

Madame MARCIA. Well, I was cut off just a few moments before adjournment, and I gave way. My statement is this: At a meeting of the Senate committee on February 26 for the discussion of bill H. R. 8989, sponsored by Mr. Houdini, I was assured by Mr. Houdini and Representative Bloom that it did not in any way affect me.

Up until recently it had not been my intention to attend the present hearings, but on being reliably informed that I was being

"framed" and that they intended to get me, I communicated with Mr. Bloom's office, and was advised by the gentleman from New York to act as I thought best in the matter. I did, and was present, to find myself the victim of one of the most malicious attacks that any man could make upon any man, woman, or child.

However, Mr. Houdini on Tuesday saw fit to retract his accusation, and I now feel that this bill does in no way affect me, for, as I understand it, it is aimed at the elimination of frauds, and I, as a scientist, feel myself capable at any time of meeting any committees qualified to decide upon my ability and integrity as an astrologer.

Mr. REID. Let me ask you this: Was there anything in the stars that told you you were liable to be framed in this?

Madame MARCIA. The stars, according to my—may I evade that question for just a moment? Must I answer it?

Mr. REID. No; take your freedom of action.

Madame MARCIA. My own horoscope told me years ago, and I have followed it closely for myself since I have arrived at a few years of discretion, always to beware. I have Saturn in Scorpio in the ascendancy, which would make me a victim.

Mr. REID. What does that mean?

Madame MARCIA. I have the books with me. It tells me that I would always be attacked by the minions of the law, so therefore I have framed my life to live closely within the law, because I am always subject to it.

Mr. REID. I have been scared myself a lot of times—

Madame MARCIA (interposing). Snakes and policemen are the only things I am afraid of.

Mr. REID. I have been scared a lot of times, but I did not know about Saturn in Scorpio.

Madame MARCIA. I would be glad to show you. But that is in my horoscope. So it does not make any difference whether it is to-day or to-morrow, I live so that I am open.

Mr. REID. That is always commendable.

Madame MARCIA. Thank you; and I think my reputation would prove it.

Mr. REID. I have not heard your reputation attacked.

Madame MARCIA. It was. You were not here on Monday.

During Mr. Houdini's previous visit in the city he attacked astrology. I saw fit to challenge him. I wrote him a letter, appeared at the Belasco Theater, and challenged him. He said he could do anything, and in his open denunciation said that "mud" millions of miles away could not affect human life. I wrote him a letter telling him I was there to challenge him, and I did challenge him in open forum. I asked him what his opinion of astrology was, and he said it was a fake like all the rest.

If you would like to put me under oath—

Mr. REID (interposing). No!

Mr. HOUDINI. I still think the same.

Madame MARCIA. Your opinion does not count, sir.

Mr. REID. I will decide now.

Madame MARCIA. I just want to say that, in a few words, that I challenge him, and that \$10,000 is mine as well as yours.

Mr. REID. You and I will take half apiece.

MR. RATHBONE. Do not any of the rest of us get in on that? [Laughter.]

MADAME MARCIA. Every crusader—and I am not particularly educated and I could not quote all the crusaders—is willing to sacrifice his money and his time and his life in the defense of his cause, the perpetuation of it. Is that true?

MR. REID. Always.

MADAME MARCIA. Mr. Houdini has been complaining that he has been held here under great expense, etc.

MR. REID. Are you complaining about that?

MR. HOUDINI. No, sir; I called attention to the fact that I came all the way from Chicago.

MADAME MARCIA. You said you wanted to go; that you came here at great expense.

MR. HOUDINI. You wanted me to come next week, and I said I had to go.

MADAME MARCIA. Here is some of his marked money when he spied on me. I brought it here.

MR. REID. Has he marked money?

MADAME MARCIA. His spy claimed she did, and they twice tried——

MR. HOUDINI. Mr. Chairman——

MR. REID (interposing). You keep out of the constellation just yet.

MADAME MARCIA. Your act comes in the second act. [Laughter.]

The spy came, trying twice over the telephone to have an appointment with me. I never advertise in any way, shape, or form.

MR. HOUDINI. That compels me to produce my witness. We are compelled to call my witness now.

MR. REID. All right; you can call your witness.

MR. HOUDINI. You are just bringing this on yourself.

MADAME MARCIA. Absolutely, I am, in defense of my honor and my reputation. That is all I want as an American woman.

MR. REID. And we will help you get it.

MADAME MARCIA. I knew you would.

I want to just say this, that this woman—and I have a remarkable faculty of a very good memory—twice tried to get an appointment with me over the phone, saying that she did not have this amount of money. My fee is \$10. I did not know that any one had the power to tell me what I should charge, and I understood when I came in the District that the law did not set my fee, or the specialist's, or the doctor's, or anybody's. I thought I was worth \$10, and my thousands of patrons have agreed and are glad to pay it and come.

MR. REID. It is \$10?

MADAME MARCIA. Yes, sir; and it is posted on the wall. You do not have to bargain with me; it is posted on the wall.

MR. REID. That is a good idea. If it is not worth \$10 to them, they do not have to stay.

MADAME MARCIA. That is right, and I do not send out to get you and I do not invite you and I do not advertise.

MR. GILBERT. Do you use a large glass sphere?

MADAME MARCIA. No, sir; I do not. I have plain, every-day astrological books, and I invited Houdini at the Belasco Theater to

come, and his manager, etc., and I invite this committee, and I said that I would be very glad, absolutely happy and glad, to be put under investigation by a competent committee, but not under lay minds.

Mr. REID. Is this committee all right?

Madame MARCIA. Yes, sir; this committee; any committee; I do not care who it is.

Mr. REID. I appoint Mr. Rathbone, Mr. Gilbert, and Mr. Hammer to look into this.

Madame MARCIA. If they think I am a fraud, follow the textbooks, but I must have genuine data.

Now, the lady in question called and asked for an appointment, and I readily gave it to her at 11 o'clock. However, two ladies came in before her to give me some data for written work, and she looked up and down the floor, and she had a baby at home and her taxicab was waiting, and I do not know what all.

I live in a very meager home and the doors are all open. There are no cabinets or charms that you can buy.

Mr. REID. You have a nice place there.

Madame MARCIA. A very small place, and very meager. I have all I can do to collect the money due me, and she tried to get me to take \$5, and I told her \$10 or nothing; that I was not a junk shop. You can not bargain with me; that is my price; and I stick to it.

Now, sir, the investigator came in and gave me her data. I gave her a copy of the chart. I do not know whether the data is genuine or not; no one knows, and astrology does not teach me.

I just looked at the chart for the data given me, and the first thing I told her was that she was as tricky as a bag of monkeys.

Mr. REID. Did you have a hunch?

Madame MARCIA. I had Mars in the ascendary, in Leo, and Leo is the lion and Mars is the war god. Make your own deduction.

Mr. RATHBONE. I would like to ask a few questions.

Madame MARCIA. All I ask of these gentlemen is, and the only interest in any way, shape, or form I have is, does this cover astrology?

Mr. REID. You can not prove it by me.

Mr. RATHBONE. I want to ask a few questions, more for my own enlightenment than anything else.

In astrology, you tell both the person's character and temperament and their future? Both of those things are included in it—is that right?

Madame MARCIA. No, not exactly; because the stars incline to down below, and you, as an emanation of God, and God being within yourself, are a thinking being.

Mr. RATHBONE. I do not want to shut you off, but could you answer the question?

Madame MARCIA. Perhaps I am too ignorant.

Mr. RATHBONE. No, no. I ask it just for my own enlightenment. I would like to know if astrology does not deal in both of those things, to persons analyzing the people, what their temperament is, and also what is going to happen to them later on?

Madame MARCIA. It is a map of your life, whether it is present or future.

Mr. RATHBONE. It is a map also of your temperament and character as well?

Madame MARCIA. Absolutely, and your assets and liabilities, and helps you to shape your life.

Mr. REID. It is a road map showing the detours.

Mr. RATHBONE. With respect to that part of astrology which deals with a person's character or temperament—and lets us segregate that for a moment—that could not possibly have any relation to this bill, because it could not be classed as fortune telling—is that right?

Madame MARCIA. I think so, yes.

Mr. REID. You think what?

Madame MARCIA. That that could not be classed as fortune telling.

Mr. RATHBONE. Now, there is a part of astrology which deals in telling what the future is going to be—is that right?

Madame MARCIA. We do not say "future"—we just simply say that the conditions here are that this will occur in your life, that these are possibilities. They are not facts absolutely.

Mr. RATHBONE. Well, I do not believe that—

Madame MARCIA (interposing). May I ask you a question?

Mr. RATHBONE. I have not got an answer to my question yet.

Mr. REID. You answer the lady's question.

Madame MARCIA. Does the United States Weather Bureau, when they use the stars—do they predict the weather for you?

Mr. REID. They certainly do, but it does not always come true.

Madame MARCIA. Are they guilty of fraud?

Mr. REID. I should say they are, a lot of times. [Laughter.]

Madame MARCIA. Then they are punishable.

Mr. REID. We ought to put them in jail.

Madame MARCIA. Then I will step out, and if Mr. Houdini will pay me the \$10,000, I will tell him a good way to get rid of me as a fortune teller.

Mr. REID. We do not want to get rid of you.

Mr. RATHBONE. Just let us stick to the point. We can clean it up in just a question or two.

As I understand it, that part of astrology which deals—you do not like the word "future"—which deals with possibilities—

Madame MARCIA (interposing). I like the word "future."

Mr. RATHBONE. You do?

Madame MARCIA. Yes, sir.

Mr. RATHBONE (continuing). Which deals with the person's future, that does not pretend to foretell the future, but tells what the possibilities in you or other persons or other circumstances and surroundings are which might cause something to happen in your life. Is that right?

Madame MARCIA. That is exactly right.

Mr. RATHBONE. Well, for one, I do not believe that is fortune telling.

Madame MARCIA. Thank you.

Mr. RATHBONE. Other than those two things, what other things does astrology deal in?

Madame MARCIA. None that I know of, sir.

Mr. RATHBONE. That covers the whole field?

Madame MARCIA. As far as I know.

Mr. RATHBONE. This does not directly bear upon it, but I know something of the people who originally believed in astrology. Do your books follow a consecutive line of tradition, so to speak, from ancient times, and do you believe in that?

Madame MARCIA. Yes, sir.

Mr. RATHBONE. You believe the same as the ancients did?

Madame MARCIA. They are absolutely technical, and I would be glad to show my books to you, and I use them technically, at any time.

Mr. RATHBONE. If there had been a law in effect 500 or 1,000 years ago which prohibited astrology and fixed a penalty for the belief in it, practically every living person of the world then would have been in jail, would they not?

Madame MARCIA. Yes, sir; they would.

Mr. REID. They might as well have been as to have lived then.

Madame MARCIA. They might just as well.

Then, am I to understand that I am in no way covered by fraud in this business?

Mr. REID. We would not want to say that. The words speak for themselves and the interpretation that may be put upon them. Of course, that is for the stars to determine.

Madame MARCIA. Yes, sir.

Mr. HAMMER. I would suggest to the lady that the intention of the legislators has nothing to do with the construction of the statute. I think it was intended to include you. That is my opinion.

Madame MARCIA. I think it was, too. I have been framed to that extent, although upon their word as gentlemen, voluntarily they claimed it did not. I wonder what changed their opinion. That is what I want to know.

Mr. REID. The stars switched?

Madame MARCIA. Yes, the stars are against me.

Mr. REID. Now, if Leo and Mars should get quite near, what would happen to us?

Madame MARCIA. I would not want to tell you that now.

Mr. REID. Would you care to answer questions by Mr. Houdini?

Madame MARCIA. You had better put me under oath.

Mr. REID. No, that is not necessary.

Mr. HOUDINI. I would like to have the committee permit my investigator to read part of her report.

Mr. REID. No; you ask her the questions, and we will put the witness on the stand afterwards and we will interrogate her. You just ask the questions.

Mr. HOUDINI. Do you include spiritualistic manifestations when you give your astrological seances?

Madame MARCIA. No, sir; I do not.

Mr. HOUDINI. You do not?

Madame MARCIA. No, I do not.

Mr. HOUDINI. Were you a medium before you came to Washington?

Madame MARCIA. I was clairvoyant medium?

Mr. HOUDINI. Clairvoyant medium?

Madame MARCIA. Medium, if you like. Everything is a medium that conveys.

Mr. HOUDINI. Were you not associated with one of the greatest money-getting mediums, named Mrs. Piper?

Madame MARCIA. Mrs. Pepper?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes.

Madame MARCIA. All right; get your names right.

I was called upon constantly and frequently to officiate in Mrs. Pepper's church in the afternoons at the Aurora Grotto Cathedral, in Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mr. HOUDINI. Do you know that she was one of the worst and the greatest known frauds outside of Ann O'delia Diss Debar in the history of spiritualism?

Madame MARCIA. I do not know anything detrimental to Mrs. Pepper's character personally. I personally did not live with her, did not associate with her. I worked in the same church.

Mr. HOUDINI. Did you know that I handed to the committee a résumé of her life, which is of such a character—

Madame MARCIA (interposing). What has that to do with me personally?

Mr. HOUDINI. You worked with her.

Madame MARCIA. You work with crooks every day of your life.

Mr. HOUDINI. I do not know it, though.

Madame MARCIA. My purse was stolen yesterday in this very room.

Mr. HOUDINI. I do not know it, but you do when you are a medium.

Madame MARCIA. I never said I was a medium.

Mr. HOUDINI. You made a statement that I do not like to have go on record. You made the statement that I called the late Mrs. Harding a name. That is not true. You took a liberty with what I said. I never made any remarks about Mrs. Harding. I did say that she came to you for readings.

Mr. REID. Did she?

Madame MARCIA. She did.

Mr. HOUDINI. And I never made any remark against the lady.

Madame MARCIA. The gentlemen of the committee, some of them, were present—some were not. You said that I told President Harding—just then I interrupted you and told you I did not, and you said I preyed upon him, his weakness. That is what I asked you, and you said that the insane asylums are filled with degenerates, the weak-minded, preyed upon by us, and I asked you—

Mr. HOUDINI. No.

Madame MARCIA. Yes; you did.

Mr. REID. This is a pretty good issue.

Madame MARCIA. You did, and everybody will bear witness to it that was here. Then I asked you if anyone in this room would presume or dare to say that the late Florence Harding was a degenerate, weak-minded, or imbecilic person. She was known the world over as a very brilliant woman and a keen woman. [Applause.]

You might vilify my character, but you can not vilify Florence Harding, nor the late President Harding in my presence.

Mr. HOUDINI. Did Mrs. Harding ever give trance seances? Did she sell lucky charms? Did she tell the future?

Madame MARCIA. Do I sell any lucky charms?

Mr. HOUDINI. If you do I will catch you.

Madame MARCIA. You will never catch me; no, sir. I am as slick as you are, thank you.

Mr. REID. Are there any further questions?

Madame MARCIA. I think I am through, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. REID. Are there any further questions? We want to give everybody a full hearing.

That seems to be all. We are very much obliged to you.

STATEMENT OF REV. ROSE MACKENBERG

Mr. REID. Will you give us your name, please?

Miss MACKENBERG. Rev. Rose Mackenberg.

May I make a request before beginning?

I would ask not to be interrupted, because when I was talking before I was repeatedly interrupted by Mrs. Marcia and Mrs. Mertzell.

Mr. REID. We will not have you interrupted by anybody except us. We will interrupt you when we think it is appropriate.

Tell us how long you have been a reverend.

Miss MACKENBERG. I have been ordained six times as a spiritualistic minister, and I also own two churches.

Mr. REID. You own two churches?

Miss MACKENBERG. Yes; I do.

Mr. REID. Where?

Miss MACKENBERG. In Hartford and in Worcester.

Mr. REID. They are the same churches that Mr. Houdini——

Mr. Houdini (interposing). The lady does not own one church. One church was taken away by default. She still thinks she owns it because she purchased two.

Mr. REID. Would that be false pretenses if somebody told her she did not own the church?

Go and and tell us about your being ordained.

Miss MACKENBERG. May I say that Madame Marcia referred to me as a spy?

Mr. REID. I want to know about your past first. What is your record in your spiritual work? You said you had been ordained six times.

Miss MACKENBERG. Yes; and I have investigated 300 mediums.

Mr. REID. I want to know about your being ordained.

Miss MACKENBERG. I have been ordained by the spiritualistic church within the time limit from 20 minutes, being the shortest time it took to be ordained, to 2 days.

Mr. REID. What I mean is, were you ordained on the square, or do you go through it for the purposes of this investigation?

Miss MACKENBERG. No; they had no reason——

Mr. REID (interposing). I am talking about your theory, not theirs. We want to get your attitude of mind.

Miss MACKENBERG. As an investigator?

Mr. REID. Yes. Were you ordained on the square? I want to get what your attitude was so the committee may give your testimony such weight as we consider proper.

MISS MACKENBERG. I was ordained with the same rights as an orthodox minister, and I have the same privileges—to baptize, to marry, and to bury.

MR. REID. Did you believe it when you were getting it?

MISS MACKENBERG. I was in search of the truth.

MR. REID. Did you ever find it?

MISS MACKENBERG. I have never found it yet. If I did find it, I would take advantage of my ordination.

MR. REID. And would operate?

MISS MACKENBERG. Would operate.

MR. REID. You did not go into it with the idea of operating?

MISS MACKENBERG. If I found the truth, I would be glad to.

MR. REID. Your different ordinations were for the purpose of your investigation; and if it happened to catch, you would be willing to stand for it?

MISS MACKENBERG. I do not quite understand the question.

MR. REID. You said that if you found the truth you would be willing to operate under the ordination.

MISS MACKENBERG. If I found that spiritualism really developed psychic phenomena, I would be glad to be a spiritualist and take advantage of my ordination.

MR. REID. You never believed it would?

MISS MACKENBERG. Believed it would?

MR. REID. You never had faith?

MISS MACKENBERG. I had faith, but it was not proven.

MR. REID. What proof would you need so that you might arrive at that point where you would consider yourself an honest spiritualist?

MISS MACKENBERG. To my mind, definite proof of psychic phenomena would be if the spiritualists or the medium could give me some tangible evidence that they do communicate with the spirits on the other side and give me a message that would really mean something.

MR. REID. You do not really think that is possible? Do you suppose that is possible?

MISS MACKENBERG. I do not know.

MR. REID. I want you to answer the question yes or no.

MISS MACKENBERG. I have not made up my mind that that is so. In all the investigations that I have made I have not found any.

MR. REID. Do you believe that it is possible?

MISS MACKENBERG. I was sincere in my investigation to find it.

MR. REID. You are not willing to say that you believe it impossible that it might come to you?

MISS MACKENBERG. You mean, to find a medium who could bring it?

MR. REID. No. Do you believe that there might be something in it, on the square?

MISS MACKENBERG. I would be glad to believe it.

MR. REID. Are you willing to tell the committee now that your mind is in such condition that you believe that at some time, somewhere, this realization might come to you that there was something in this spiritualism?

MISS MACKENBERG. Yes; I would be glad to say that my mind is wide open. I am not prejudiced either way.

Mr. REID. Do you believe that these people might possibly be on the square?

Miss MACKENBERG. I believe it is possible.

Mr. REID. Wait a minute. I am asking you if you believe that these people, when they are trying to practice spiritualism, are on the square.

Miss MACKENBERG. Do I believe that they are on the square in giving the messages.

Mr. REID. In pursuing their practice.

Miss MACKENBERG. No. I found that all those I investigated were either frauds or psychosis cases.

Mr. REID. You do not believe that there is a possibility of this ever being the truth, that there is such a thing as spiritualism on the square?

Miss MACKENBERG. I believe it might develop, although I have not come across it yet.

Mr. REID. You believe it might develop?

Miss MACKENBERG. I believe so.

Mr. REID. You think it is possible?

Miss MACKENBERG. I believe so.

Mr. GILBERT. In order to get your testimony in better shape in the record, what about your churches? What did you pay for those churches?

Miss MACKENBERG. For my ordinations I paid from \$5 to \$25.

Mr. GILBERT. I never asked you about that. What did you pay for those churches? You said you owned two churches.

Miss MACKENBERG. In one church I was ordained and the church was given to me gratis, and I paid \$5 for the ordination, including the church, and the other church I paid \$15 for.

Mr. GILBERT. You paid \$5 for the ordination, and they threw in the church?

Miss MACKENBERG. Yes.

Mr. GILBERT. All right.

Mr. HAMMER. Do I understand that you really believe in spiritualism?

Miss MACKENBERG. I would like to believe in psychic phenomena if I could.

Mr. HAMMER. Were you a preacher in earnest or were you ordained as a minister for the purpose of being an investigator?

Miss MACKENBERG. I do not quite understand the question.

Mr. HAMMER. Well, do you pretend to be a preacher or did you seriously and sincerely receive your ordination?

Miss MACKENBERG. I made no pretenses whatever. I just went into the place and they said, "You are very psychic; you ought to develop as a medium. In fact, I could ordain you and you could practice and develop your psychic powers."

Mr. HAMMER. Were you sincere in that or were you doing it to investigate for Mr. Houdini?

Miss MACKENBERG. They asked me no questions as to whether I was sincere or not.

Mr. HAMMER. But I am asking you.

Miss MACKENBERG. All they are interested in is the amount of money I could pay them.

Mr. HAMMER. Were you doing it with the sincere purpose of being a minister of the gospel or a minister in the church or for the purpose of promoting your activities?

Miss MACKENBERG. I was doing that to see how far the spiritualists would go in trying to obtain money for ordinations and in developing their psychic researches.

Mr. HAMMER. Did Madame Marcia tell you that she charged any fee or solicit you to go to her place? How did you come to go there?

Miss MACKENBERG. Well, Madame Marcia challenged Mr. Houdini. We have gotten letters—a number of letters were sent to the newspaper office from people complaining about Madame Marcia, and he suggested that I investigate her to see whether there was any truth in the letters sent in, because the letters that came about Madame Marcia revealed a spiritualistic means in order to get up the astrological—

Mr. HAMMER (interposing). Did she give you any chart?

Miss MACKENBERG. A chart?

Mr. HAMMER. Yes.

Miss MACKENBERG. Yes; it was submitted yesterday.

Mr. HAMMER. You submitted it?

Miss MACKENBERG. Yes.

Mr. HAMMER. Is it filed with the committee?

Miss MACKENBERG. I believe it is.

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes; I filed it.

Mr. HAMMER. Is this date of birth that you had indicated on the map? Is your birth data on there?

Mr. REID. He wants to ask your age, but he is afraid to.

Mr. HAMMER. No, no; I just asked if it was on the map.

Miss MACKENBERG. There was a date of birth given; yes.

Mr. HAMMER. Did you give the correct date of birth to her?

Miss MACKENBERG. I did not.

Mr. HAMMER. She told you in her letter which she wrote you that you should give her the correct date of your birth and the hour of your birth as nearly as possible, and the place of birth, which is most essential? She told you that before she took your money, did she not?

Miss MACKENBERG. I never heard from Madame Marcia by any letter of any kind.

Mr. HAMMER. Didn't she write this letter to you?

Miss MACKENBERG. May I see it?

Mr. HAMMER. Did it not say in there—

Miss MACKENBERG (interposing). I got no letter from her.

Madame MARCIA. That is what I do send out in answer to the letters that come to me. They ask how much it would cost for a written horoscope, and I did tell her that I needed the date and she voluntarily came in and gave me July 1, and the year I won't say, and 7 a. m., Cincinnati, Ohio, and I asked her whether she was born at sun or standard time, and she did not know.

Mr. HAMMER. Did you ever study astrology?

Miss MACKENBERG. I have read some upon it; yes.

Mr. HAMMER. You can not do reading astrologically, can you?

Miss MACKENBERG. Judging from the reading—

Mr. HAMMER (interposing). From the chart.

Miss MACKENBERG. Judging from the reading that Madame Marcia gave me, she did give me a spiritualistic reading, stating it was an astrological reading.

Mr. HAMMER. How do you know which it was if you did not give her your birth?

Miss MACKENBERG. By the spirit messages she brought through.

Madame MARCIA. May I just ask a question?

Mr. REID. No; not now.

Mr. HAMMER. You told her that your main object was to see what you were best fitted for?

Miss MACKENBERG. No; I said nothing at all.

Mr. HAMMER. You said that a while ago.

Miss MACKENBERG. I just wanted to see whether the letters we received had any truth in them.

Mr. HAMMER. Did you make any complaint to the police that you thought you were defrauded?

Miss MACKENBERG. You mean, would I?

Mr. HAMMER. Did you?

Miss MACKENBERG. No; I did not.

Mr. HAMMER. Well, if you were defrauded, do you not think, if you wanted to break this matter up, that that would have been a practical way to have done it instead of having all this publicity about it?

Miss MACKENBERG. The investigation was not made for the purpose of publicity. I am an investigator for Mr. Houdini, he to take whatever action he sees fit.

Mr. REID. Now, go ahead and tell us what happened in your own way.

Miss MACKENBERG. I phoned Madame Marcia at about 9.30 a. m. Monday morning and made an appointment for 11 o'clock. Upon arriving in the vicinity I observed a high-priced motor car, with a liveried chauffeur seated at the wheel, bearing license plate No.—

Mr. MYERS (interposing). Mr. Chairman—

Mr. REID. We are going to give you a full hearing.

You go ahead, Miss Mackenberg.

Miss MACKENBERG. My appointment was for 11 a. m., and by 11.30 a. m. I had sent the maid up several times to inform her I was still waiting. Evidently my taxi was observed by Madame Marcia, and I distinctly heard Madame Marcia say to the maid to tell me to dismiss the cab, as I would be at her home for more than an hour.

At about 11.30 a. m. two women left the house and I was asked to go upstairs. Madame Marcia profusely apologized for keeping me waiting—

Mr. HAMMER (interposing). I do not think it is necessary to take down this testimony. I am certain every word of it is in the record in a statement made heretofore by the witness.

Mr. HOUDINI. No; it was interrupted half a dozen times.

Mr. REID. It will not do any harm to have it in the record twice, but I insists that both sides have fair play. We are trying to give it here to-night, and as long as I am in the chair each side is going to have an opportunity to make a fair presentation.

Miss MACKENBERG. Madame Marcia profusely apologized for keeping me waiting, saying, "I have been crying; I am so upset.

Houdini is coming before the Senate committee to-morrow to try and put the Copeland-Bloom bill over, and the mediums and spiritualists keep calling me up saying that I must join their church for protection and I don't want to join their church; why should my religion be dictated to me? The spiritualists say that Houdini is going to include the astrologers in this bill, but at his last visit here he said that the astrologers do not come under this bill at all."

She then went on to say that the two women who had just left were doing very active work in the Senate relative to the bill that Houdini is trying to pass doing away with mediums, and that they have a very large acquaintance in the Senate. One of them invited her for lunch for Tuesday.

She then excused herself and called up Congressman Bloom's office, and I heard Madame Marcia repeat what the girl at the other end of the wire had said to her, something to the effect that Congressman Bloom had just stepped out and would return shortly.

She said that she had spoken before the Senate a few weeks ago when Houdini was present and that they were on friendly terms.

Then she went on to say that she used to give spirit messages and that up to a short time ago the National Spiritualistic Association used to be her name as a spirit message bearer and that the halls were always overcrowded; in fact, that she packed them the same as Houdini did when he played at the Belasco Theater, and the night that Harding died she had a crowd that pushed the glass through the doors of her house.

Mr. REID. These are statements that Madame Marcia made to you?

Miss MACKENBERG. Yes; that she used to work with a Mrs. Pepper, of New York, about 20 years ago, and then came to Washington and opened up as an astrologer, stating that she went in for that branch of the work, as there were so many spirit mediums here that she went into the astrological branch of spiritualism, explaining this by saying that spiritualism was just like the Government departments, all coming under the one head but each covering a different branch of the service; that a number of the Senators visit her, and she has quite a clientele; that Sunday night she attended a materializing seance given by the Unity Spiritualist Church of the National Spiritualistic Organization at the Playhouse, and a note was written which was supposed to come from the spirits, and as she was about to reach it she touched the supposed spirit hand and the hand withdrew, but after the seance she walked to the cabinet and got possession of the note. She showed it to me, but it was scrawled very badly and the writing was illegible. She ridiculed the idea of any spirit writing a message.

The conversation continued along these lines for about one hour, and I repeatedly said, "I will return; you are too hysterical to do any work to-day." After about an hour she started and took a chart and asked what month I was born in. Knowing her claims for doing and predicting things, when she asked me for my birth date, town, and the hour, I gave her the wrong date, as I did not wish to give her any clues to my identity.

She then took a calendar bound in cloth covers, turned to the year, and made extracts from it as per exhibits. I asked her whether she would give me the horoscope in writing, whereupon she said it

would cost \$15, but said I could make notes of everything she told me and handed me some paper upon which to make notes.

She gave me nothing definite. She told me I was psychic, had strong occult forces, was sensitive, would die in the open for an honorable cause; that the moon said I would die before the public; that I would inherit some money; that my father had passed out, but he never did amount to much—and my father is still alive, happy, and well; that I had a pretty good temper; that I was held back by home influence; that the following year would be very lucky to me; that I ought to go into any business connected with food, such as a restaurant, tea room, or lunch room; that I was very psychic and had strong forces about me.

She then said, "Now, as I go into this condition, I get the spirit forces with me." She then commenced to breathe very heavily, taking deep breaths, closing her eyes, placing her hand over her body up and down and around, saying, "I get a condition as though some one had passed into a spirit through cancer; I smell cancer." And then she sniffed as though actually smelling that odor, as one would do who is actually in the room with a patient suffering with cancer. She went through the emotions as though she smelled cancer.

Mr. REID. She tried to intimate you had cancer?

Miss MACKENBERG. Yes, sir; and sniffed as though smelling the odor, as one would do with a patient. The influences came very strong trying to take possession over me, and then she pretended that the influences were coming over her, and then she moved to shake it off. She then took hold of her arm and said a spirit by the name of Joseph comes there with a pain in his arm, and, oh, he suffered so, and she asked me whether I recognized this spirit. She then went through the emotions very hard, as though her arm were paralyzed.

That about concluded the reading.

A sign near her desk reads "\$10; phone calls, 10 cents."

Having visited over 300 mediums this season, her adroit methods of obtaining information by using the horoscopic stuff and blaming it on to her mediumistic condition impressed me as being a means of obtaining information.

Her methods of getting information are so remarkable that it makes one think who is not initiated into the methods of mediums that it is uncanny. She would ask you leading questions and appear not to notice the answers throughout our talk and general conversation.

From what she told me, she simply draws on her imagination, judging from the way the caller is dressed. I wore a gray coat, heavy shoes, and on ill-becoming hat and glasses, which concealed my identity, and she judged my position in life accordingly.

Wishing to get some evidence, I asked her for a copy of the chart she had made out, and she took a blank chart, filled it out in pencil, remarking that she ought to use ink, as the pencil marks would not last long.

At no time did she discover or suspect my identity, even though she had seen me at the Belasco Theater on Monday night when she was there and when I occupied the box opposite her.

I purposely tried to bargain with her about the price of the horoscope, but she was adamant and would not accept less than

\$10, and she invited me to return for additional information, saying that there would be no extra charge for same.

At no time, from her talk or mannerisms did she in any way indicate that she suspected me. The reason I bargained with her was that in going around to these various mediums I had found that some asked \$500 and then would sell a lucky charm or the reading for \$5, even though they had already asked \$500.

All told, I was with her one hour and three-quarters and still she wanted to talk. Before leaving I paid her in these bills and left.

Mr. REID. What conclusions do you draw from your evidence that is material to the bill before the committee?

Miss MACKENBERG. That Madame Marcia goes into spiritualistic—resorts to spiritualism, in order to give an astrological reading.

Mr. REID. Now, this bill is to prevent fraud. Suppose that you were on the square when you went in there; how would you have been defrauded in any way?

Miss MACKENBERG. May I say that I have no particular interest in the bill, neither one way nor the other. I merely went as an investigator.

Mr. REID. If you have investigated 300, your judgment ought to be very good. You ought to tell this committee some very wonderful things which would aid them in considering this bill, and I would like to have you dissociate yourself from anything else except the facts. It is all right with me for you to be an investigator. I think it is a good work to investigate and find things.

Mr. HOUDINI. Tell them about the degenerates you meet under the guise of mediums—about the Pittsburgh man; about how the man tried to talk to you.

Madame MARCIA. I object. Madame Marcia is under discussion now.

Mr. REID. Have you stated all you want in regard to Madame Marcia?

Miss MACKENBERG. Yes.

Mr. REID. Give us your general notion why this bill should be enacted.

Miss MACKENBERG. In most of my investigations into the mediums and those who pretend to bring back the dead I have found, in talking to them, that they always ask a number of leading questions and pretend not to notice the answers you give them, and then immediately act upon the information you give them.

Mr. REID. So does most everybody else, do they not?

Miss MACKENBERG. But they claim that the spirit gives it to them, and they go into these various trances. They apparently talk to the spirit in the room, saying, "Yes, spirit, wait a minute and I will tell them," and they mention a number of things, and now and then they make a lucky guess.

In going to these various men mediums, during a considerable experience, they always want the women to come into a dark room to give you a trumpet seance, or else go into a trance, and they insist on no one else going with you.

Mr. REID. What has the trumpet to do with the dark room?

Miss MACKENBERG. They can not do it in the light. In order to get the spirits back they must have absolute darkness, without any interfering vibration.

Mr. REID. Did they ever attempt anything immoral with you?

Miss MACKENBERG. Yes, they have. I have had considerable experience with that.

Mr. REID. And from your investigation, have you found that other women have been subjected to the same experience?

Miss MACKENBERG. Very much so. In many towns we have reported cases that I have investigated to the police, and they said that they would have much better luck with the mediums in town if the women who had been insulted would have the nerve to tell what had really taken place to the police, but that the facts were that many women would not want to be connected with what had happened. They merely reported it, and in Pittsburgh there was——

Mr. HOUDINI (interposing). He is the head of a church.

Miss MACKENBERG. Yes; he travels from city to city, giving lectures, etc.

Mr. HOUDINI. I can tell you the name privately.

Mr. REID. We do not care about the name.

Mr. HOUDINI. He is a colored man, and he gets white women in there.

Miss MACKENBERG. And he apparently went into this trance and said that the spirit of my husband came to him and told him that in order for me to be more successful I would have to go through a certain condition. Oh, it was very terrible, too terrible to repeat. We turned the matter over to the police department, and they said they had been trying to get his particular man for 25 years; that he has been known to do this sort of thing, but that none of the women would ever care to voice what he had suggested to them.

And then another man in Hartford, in order to get a reading, said that he would have to purify me. He pretended to go into a trance and he closed his eyes and tried to take advantage of seeing how far he could go with a woman.

Mr. REID. Has your experience taught you that it is——

Miss MACKENBERG (interposing). One more thing. Just recently, in Chicago, where we were last I went to one of the mediums there, and he was one of the head ones—in fact, he was one of the shining lights of the Spiritualist Church, and while I was there he went into a trance and he said, "The spirit of your husband comes here, and he tells me that you are going to get some money very shortly. In fact, you have some money at the bank at the present time."

I asked him how much I had, and he said, \$1,800. He continued. "The spirit tells me he wants you to invest this money in some stock," and then he went on to say——

Mr. HOUDINI (interposing). Give the names there, because the man has been convicted.

Miss MACKENBERG. The name of the medium was H. E. Parker, and the stock that he said the spirit wanted me to buy from him was the Wilcox Transportation Co.'s and he insisted that he have a certified check for \$1,000 the following morning. Well, we paid \$25, and in the meantime made an investigation to see whether the stock was any good. It later developed that the stock was absolutely worthless, and the police took a hand in it and the man was arrested and was tried and found guilty. This took place about two weeks ago.

In fact, in almost every city I have been to, of all the mediums I have investigated, they all either resort to fraud, apparently under a trance, and say the spirits throw flowers into your lap, or they bring children back and engage in these other matters I referred to, and some of them have restored to some of the weirdest descriptions in going into the readings. Some bring back the coffins and the hospital operations, and, judging from the appearance that I could convey to them, the picture they would draw would fit the person I was supposed to be.

MR. REID. The question the committee would like to have the answer to is, have your investigations disclosed that these conditions always exist with spiritualists? That is the point that is before this committee.

MISS MACKENBERG. I do not quite understand your question.

MR. REID. You are stating the results of your investigation?

MISS MACKENBERG. Yes.

MR. REID. What the committee would like to learn is whether these experiences always accompany the people that claim to be spiritualists?

MISS MACKENBERG. Always. I have never found it to be different. In fact, I would be glad to find a medium who would make a lucky guess.

MR. REID. I am talking about these horrible conditions. I do not care so much about their fooling them, but if they use spiritualism as a cloak to do these immoral things, of course that is a matter that demands very prompt action, and I am asking you if you have found that these things have always been associated with spiritualists.

MISS MACKENBERG. You mean, when the conditions were such that there were men spiritualists?

MR. REID. Yes.

MISS MACKENBERG. Yes; in all cases these men were spiritualists and the head of churches. In fact, I can give you lots of names, because we have them.

MR. GILBERT. You do not quite catch what I think the chairman wants to know and what I want to know. Is the effort to lead you in such immorality associated with spiritualism?

MISS MACKENBERG. Yes; absolutely. They say that the spirit of your husband comes back, and he comes to tell you to do whatever they say they want you to do.

MR. GILBERT. And that is the usual and accustomed practice among them?

MISS MACKENBERG. Yes.

MR. HOUDINI. I would like to introduce my niece as a witness.

MR. REID. Wait until we get through with this witness.

MR. HOUDINI. All right.

MISS MACKENBERG. I believe I am through.

STATEMENT OF MISS JULIA SAWYER

MR. HOUDINI. My niece is my secretary. This little girl was instrumental in helping me get evidence against the Rev. Frederick Wiggan, who is suing me for \$100,000.

She has helped me arrest Mrs. Cecil Cook, who has made, I should judge, half a million dollars with the trumpet work, and she helped me get Pere Keeler, of Washington, a man who has made a fortune.

Mr. REID. In Washington here?

Mr. HOUDINI. He lives here now.

Mr. REID. You caught him?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes, sir, she caught him.

Mr. REID. Is there anybody else she caught?

Mr. HOUDINI. Mr. Chairman, they think she is a little girl, but she is my private secretary and you can question her about certain things, and I believe you will agree with me that she does possess some mentality.

Mr. REID. She looks pretty smart to me. Give us your name?

Mr. HOUDINI. Tell them——

Mr. REID (interposing). Are you going to run this? You are so used to running your show, I know.

Mr. HOUDINI. I apologize.

Miss SAWYER. My name is Julia Sawyer.

Mr. REID. How old are you?

Miss SAWYER. Twenty-two years old.

Mr. REID. And how long have you been a private secretary to Mr. Houdini?

Miss SAWYER. I have been working for Mr. Houdini, starting as stenographer, since I was 16 years old.

Mr. REID. I suppose you have always been his niece, so we will not ask you about that.

Now, what experience have you had in the investigation of Spiritualists?

Miss SAWYER. Well, I have gone to Mr. Wiggin, and he gave me messages from, he said, my mother.

Mr. REID. Just a minute—so that the committee may understand; who is Mr. Wiggin?

Miss SAWYER. Mr. Wiggin is the pastor——

Mrs. EVELYN GURLY KANE. I want to speak on behalf of Doctor Wiggin whom I heard preach in the New England Conservatory of Music of Boston, and I have nothing to say but this. That Reverend Doctor Wiggin is a christian, a minister, and that Doctor Wiggin's daughter died after this man made charges against Doctor Wiggin. Mr. Houdini was at the Belasco Theater in January, 1926, and Doctor Wiggin's daughter died in January, 1926; while Mr. Houdini was abusing her father at the Belasco here in Washington. Reverend Doctor Wiggin was in mourning for the loss of his daughter and unable to be here to defend himself,

I want to say that Doctor Wiggin is the man who was a Baptist minister in the city of Boston, and you may if you wish look up his record. He is a graduate of a theological seminary and has the degree of doctor of divinity. His daughter performed great service for the United States during the World War.

I want you to invite Doctor Wiggin here. His name is Rev. Frederick A. Wiggin.

Mr. REID. Tell us who Doctor Wiggin claimed to be.

Miss SAWYER. Reverend Wiggin is a pastor of a church in Boston. I went to Reverend Wiggin, made an appointment about two weeks

ahead of time, and when I came there his wife told me to write a number of questions.

MR. REID. What did you want an appointment for?

MISS SAWYER. To get a spirit reading.

MR. REID. Did he claim to be a spiritualist?

MISS SAWYER. He claimed to read sealed messages and get answers from the spirits. He has been a pastor in Boston for 27 years.

MR. REID. Did he advertise himself as a medium or a spiritualist? How did you happen to know he was there?

MISS SAWYER. We went to his church, at his church services.

MR. REID. Was it a Baptist church?

MISS SAWYER. No; a spiritualist church.

MR. REID. He claimed it to be a spiritualist church?

MISS SAWYER. Yes, sir. His wife told me to write as many questions as I wished and Doctor Wiggin would answer them, that the spirits would give him the answers. I wrote three questions, and Doctor Wiggin takes them in his hand, and he wears glasses, but the glasses have black cloth over them, so he can not see through them, so he says, but he can look underneath because I saw his eyes from time to time glance at the paper. He sits facing his window, with the paper up in his hands this way [indicating], and as he looks under the glasses he unfolds the papers and reads the questions. I could see from where I sat these questions, the words written backwards, which showed that the written questions were toward him so he could read them.

He read them and only answered things that were told in the question. For example, I said, "Get a message for me from a woman who died two years ago." He said he saw the name of Mary Sawyer. This name was written on the paper, and he said that he saw something about two years ago, and a little later, when he finished reading it, he said, "She passed on two years ago," and do I know what that means? I said, "Yes, but Mary Sawyer is my mother, that she is living, and if the spirits could read the questions they surely could tell Doctor Wiggin that she was alive and not dead."

Well, everything that Wiggin told me was absolutely incorrect.

Then a Mrs. Cook—I went there with my mother—Mr. Reid (interposing). Is that all about Mr. Wiggin?

MISS SAWYER. That is about all.

MR. REID. How did you catch him?

MISS SAWYER. I saw how he read the questions.

MR. REID. Did he admit that you caught him?

MISS SAWYER. No, sir, but I saw the way he was reading the questions, and he only answered what was written on the paper and everything was incorrect.

MR. REID. And it is your conclusion, then, that he did not have any spiritualistic powers?

MISS SAWYER. Yes, sir.

MR. REID. That it is just quackery. Were you close to him?

MISS SAWYER. I was close to him. Doctor Wiggin sat at the desk, and I sat facing him in another chair near by.

MR. HOUDINI. When we rehearsed the questions, I showed you exactly what was going to take place. Did he do it exactly as I taught you?

MISS SAWYER. Yes, sir.

MR. HOUDINI. Every one was alive referred to in every question you asked?

MISS SAWYER. Yes, sir.

MR. HOUDINI. How much did he charge you?

MISS SAWYER. \$3.

We went to Mrs. Cook, and I asked her if I could bring my uncle the next week. She said yes; and the next week we came with Mr. Houdini and he took a seat right across from her and then she brought the spirit of some one she said was his son, named Alfred, and Mr. Houdini never had any children. He flashed a flashlight on her and we saw her there with the trumpet to her lips. This has been testified to in court by a number of witnesses, and she was fined \$100.

MR. HOUDINI. Were the spirits supposed to talk, or was the medium supposed to lift the trumpet?

MISS SAWYER. The medium is not supposed to touch the trumpet. The spirits are supposed to speak through the trumpet.

MR. HOUDINI. How much did Pere Keeler charge you for a seance?

MR. REID. Are you through with this other one? Is this still another one?

MISS SAWYER. This is Keeler.

MR. REID. This is the Washington one?

MISS SAWYER. We went to see him at Lillydale, N. Y. He charged \$3 for his sitting, and he gets messages on slates. That is, you write a number of questions and the spirits write the answers on the slates, but I saw just how—Mr. Keeler did not think; he thought I was a little girl, and he did not pretend at all as to how he did his slate trick, and I caught onto his methods.

MR. REID. You knew what the methods were, anyhow?

MISS SAWYER. Yes; Mr. Houdini said how he would do it.

MR. HOUDINI. Did he get messages from a sister you never had?

MISS SAWYER. Yes, sir.

MR. HOUDINI. And from a lot of people living?

MISS SAWYER. From a mother and from a sister and a brother, and I never had a sister, and my brother and mother were alive.

MR. HOUDINI. Tell the message that he gave you.

MISS SAWYER. The message read:

Dear mother and dear sister, daddy is well. He bought me a new pair of skates. We have lots of fun.

Your best daughter and sister,

EVELYN.

MR. HOUDINI. You never had a sister?

MISS SAWYER. No.

MR. REID. When you got through, did you tell him that you had found him out?

MISS SAWYER. Mr. Keeler came outside with us and met Mr. Houdini, and Mr. Houdini told him that both the girls, meaning Miss Mackenberg and I, had had seances with him, and Mr. Houdini told Mr. Keeler that both the girls had caught him and he admitted that he was doing this by trickery and there was nothing he could show Mr. Houdini, because they were both in the same line of business.

MR. HOUDINI. Did he admit that he was a fraud?

Miss SAWYER. Yes, sir.

Mr. HOUDINI. What did he ask of me, at the gate at Lillydale?

Miss SAWYER. He asked you to let him down easy, to take back the money.

Mr. REID. Did he take it?

Mr. HOUDINI. No. They always say, "Take back your money," and they never do.

Mr. REID. Is there anything further now? Are there any questions by members of the committee?

(No response.)

Mr. REID. I think that is all. We are very much obliged to you.

Mr. HOUDINI. Mr. Chairman, regarding property, the headquarters of the National Spiritualists' Association were donated by a man named by Thomas J. Mayer here in town. I have been trying to look up how it came about, and that [throwing document on table] is how they get all their property. That man passed away 12 or 15 years ago. I tried to find some of his associates in order to find how they get their property willed to them. This was deeded before he died, just the same as "Bright Eyes"——

Mr. REID. You have not any objection to people getting property if they can?

Mr. HOUDINI. No, not if——

Doctor STRACK (interposing). I object to our properties being brought into this controversy on this bill.

Mr. REID. What are your properties?

Doctor STRACK. Mr. Mayer was our treasurer for 15 years, and Mr. Mayer was a moneyed man of the city of Washington and he voluntarily gave us that property as our headquarters. No. 600 Pennsylvania Avenue is to be used for our national offices as long as the association can use those quarters.

Mr. REID. What are you objecting for? That is a boost for you.

Doctor STRACK. I am replying to that man who is attempting to insinuate that mediums persuaded Mr. Mayer to give us that property. Now, for the information of that man——

Mr. HOUDINI (interposing). They do it all the time.

Doctor STRACK (continuing). And for the information of the committee, I want to say this, that No. 602 Pennsylvania Avenue and No. 300 and No. 302 Sixth Street SE., are endowments for the benefit of old people. The rents coming in from those three properties go out again to help people. One woman up in Maine has been bed-ridden for 20 years, and she is on our pension list and we are giving her money. We have men and women in eighties that we are assisting with the money coming from those rents.

Is it a crime for us to be charitable?

Mr. REID. I say, this is a boost for you. You do not seem to think it is.

Doctor STRACK. It seems that when any one wills property to the spiritualists, he is crazy, but other people can will to their denominations and it is acceptable.

Mr. HOUDINI. Sarah Winslow spent \$500,000 in a house in Yose, and you know it. The mediums told her to build a room for every day and that she would never die.

STATEMENT OF S. SCHARBAU

Mr. SCHARBAU. My name is Scharbau. I do not know whether it is appropriate for me to speak or not, because I am an enlisted man, and I am a member of the Marine Band and all these ladies and gentlemen know me and I just want to tell you something about spiritualism and what it means to me. We have heard so much about it that is contrary to the fact that you probably would like to hear something that is the fact.

Spiritualism has done everything for me and my wife. First of all, I did not know that my wife was a medium—neither will you know when you become a medium, because that thing develops itself.

Mediumship is just like a talent for music; it is the same as a talent for any art, for painting. We all would play music if we would not have to practice so.

My wife was born in Germany, and she did not study very much English, but under influence she has written wonderful stories, and these stories were Catholic stories and were printed in Catholic magazines. Now, you know that Catholic magazines are not tempted to accept any sort of a story, especially when it is a yearly magazine. I can prove this to you by showing them to you, which I have on hand, and I know that these writings have been coming to her through spirit influence. I can show you messages that I have at home, and all these messages are wonderful.

Mr. REID. I did not get who you were talking about. Did your wife get some messages?

Mr. SCHARBAU. Yes, sir.

Mr. REID. Where are they?

Mr. SCHARBAU. I did not bring them up.

Mr. REID. What are they about?

Mr. SCHARBAU. Everything concerning life and the lives of men.

Mr. REID. Where did she get them from?

Mr. SCHARBAU. She gets the messages in a spiritual way, of course.

Mr. REID. How do they come—by Western Union?

Mr. SCHARBAU. Mr. Chairman, if she could explain to you how she gets them, it would be very easy.

Mr. REID. Is she here?

Mr. SCHARBAU. No; she is not.

Mr. REID. We would be glad to have her talk.

Mr. SCHARBAU. She is sick. She is not a paid medium. She is just a private person that gets these things, and she has written stories.

Mr. REID. She has written stories about what she has received?

Mr. SCHARBAU. The idea is that Spiritualists do not only get things like, "Father is well and mother is well," but they do get other things worth while.

Mr. REID. What are they?

Mr. SCHARBAU. First of all, she has written some stories.

Mr. REID. For a Catholic magazine?

Mr. SCHARBAU. One for a Catholic magazine and some for other papers. They have been printed in various papers. Of course it is good, because you must take into consideration that this woman does not speak very good English. She had to pick it up. She

came from Germany. She wrote the stories and they were accepted, and I can show you the paper. My wife's story is called "Faith" and was published by the official organ of the diocese of Los Angeles, the Tidings, in 1923. I can tell you exactly what the story is, but I know it would take entirely too long.

Then I can tell you also about my music, that I have written a number of compositions to the surprise of my teachers. I am going to receive my doctor's degree next month on the 25th at the Washington College of Music, but at the same time, when I developed my music, I know that I had a great deal of help.

I wrote some questions to Mr. Houdini when he was at the theater, and he failed to answer them. One of the questions was, What is inspiration? And I doubt to-day that Mr. Houdini could tell me what inspiration is. No man can tell what inspiration is.

Inspiration to me is something that is divine, and not everybody gets it and not everybody possesses it. We can make ourselves positive and negative. If you want to write a composition or anything that is beautiful, you will make yourself either negative or positive, or whatever it may be—I do not know, but you put yourself into a receptive mood.

In this receptive state you will be able to write. I have been sitting days, days and days without being able to get one note down in melody, and all of a sudden it comes to you, just like a flash of lightning out of a clear sky.

Mr. Houdini could not answer what inspiration is. Mr. Houdini could not answer what a crisis is. People are sick and are lying in the hospital, and the doctor tells you that there is a crisis or that the crisis has passed over. Those people do not believe that angels could come from above and teach you. They could not tell you that a divine being could teach you, could help you out of this crisis.

Spiritualism is a religion of faith. First of all, it does not teach you that everybody can wash away their sins. The principal of spiritualism is, "As a man soweth, so shall he also reap." [Applause.]

That is the principal thing, and, remember, you can not wash away your sins, and you know that every action you take is reflected back upon yourself.

That is what I have been taught.

Mr. REID. Let me ask you a question. You say that spiritualists do not wash away their sins.

Mr. SCHARBAU. I say that spiritualists are responsible——

Mr. REID (interposing). You may be a spiritualist and still keep your sins?

Mr. SCHARBAU. They do not keep their sins; they are held away from making any sins. They are told, in the first place, that as a man soweth he shall reap.

Mr. REID. I want to know whether it is different from the Methodist religion.

Mr. SCHARBAU. The Bible is substantiating spiritualism from its first page to the end. I can read the Bible and find more prophecy and spiritual truth in the Bible than anywhere.

Mr. REID. Everybody concedes that, but what has that to do with the bill before us?

Mr. SCHARBAU. There are also many private mediums in this city and in other cities which Mr. Houdini comes in contact with and that Mr. Houdini tells us about, but I could tell you to-day that I was going to build you a beautiful church if you see that we get a charter. I do not know whether Houdini does those things, but under such pretenses I could get a charter, too. I could produce writing by trickery—for instance, onion juice, and writing it on a piece of paper and rubbing it in my hands; I know that would produce writing, but that would not be spirit writing. There is the genuine and those that are not.

I can also produce slate writing by having some sort of chemical and rubbing it over the slate, the same as Mr. Houdini. There is a whole lot in chemistry that can be done.

Mr. REID. He does not claim to do anything out of the ordinary.

Mr. SCHARBAU. I know; I am sure that he does, for that is his business, of doing tricks, but there are many honest people in this world that do not do tricks, and it would be very well for people to sit in their homes trying to get a vision through the trumpets, and not to deceive themselves. It is not so much what you get in public; it is not so much what you get by what you pay for it, but it is what you get at home, the divine inspiration, that counts. That is what makes you religious and happy, and that is what gives you the foundation of life.

But there is more than that. There are so many things that spiritualism will do for you. It does not only teach you to think, but teaches you to act. It shows you that the only way that you can make any gain in your life is through action and through work. As the Bible says, pray and work. Those things go absolutely together.

I would like to ask anyone if you can see anything wrong in spiritualism, in prophecy, if you take into consideration that the Bible is full of prophecy, if you take into consideration the writings on the wall that we have here, if you take into consideration the Mount where Jesus was talking to the spirits? All these phases are phases of mediumship.

Now, I had a man who was supposed to be a doctor and who treated my wife, and she did not do very good, but he was not a good doctor. So with mediums.

But, remember, spirits do not know everything. A spirit does not take anything more with him when he goes on the other side than what he gained here; and if he was dumb here he is going to be dumb there. [Laughter.]

And then the law of protection protects life, and if you get dumb messages you can usually blame it on yourself, and if you do not get any messages it is worse, because you have never tried. Some men never think of their mothers when they are in the graves, so those mothers do not come.

Why does not a man build a beautiful monument? Why does not he go ahead and do some other stunt? He can not, because he has not developed the faculty. He claims he has only five senses. How does he know? He may have more. Some have less. [Laughter.]

Ask him about things in life. Ask him about electricity. Does he know? Of course, he does not. There are forces around us and

within us that the Almighty has given us, and they are strong, vital forces, and so we know very little about them. We are about 3,000 years old and we have had a long time to investigate, and eternity is a long time and all religions are built up upon the principle of eternity, and when you take out eternity there is nothing more of religion, and the main principle of spiritualism is the belief in an eternity.

And what did Jesus say on the Mount? Listen; I am a Jew by birth, the same as Mr. Houdini, but I was reformed, and, of course, the Jews have charms. They wear things beneath their vests, and have to kiss them every day. The Catholics are selling charms to their men, and they wear them and I do not see anything wrong, for if you think it is doing you good, go ahead and do it.

What did Jesus say to the man next to him when he was crucified? "To-morrow thou shalt be with me in paradise." Didn't He say that? Don't you all know it? You do.

After you get away from here, you go into paradise, and that is our belief, and if there is anything wrong in that belief I would like to know it.

I thank you for the time you have given me. [Applause.]

STATEMENT OF R. J. ABBATICCHIO

Mr. ABBATICCHIO. I have heard witnesses make statements to-day to the effect that the last clause in the bill, where it speaks of the sale of charms, would interfere with a certain religion, namely, the Catholic church. Those statements were made by admittedly non-Catholics. Those statements are incorrect. I am a Catholic, and I simply want to correct that statement.

Mr. SCHARBAU. I was not reflecting upon the Catholics.

Mr. ABBATICCHIO. I was not speaking about you.

Mr. SCHARBAU. Because I find it absolutely legitimate. I think your religious pictures are beautiful.

Mr. HAMMER. I want this gentleman to tell me what this is [handing article to witness].

Mr. ABBATICCHIO. That is a medal.

Mr. HAMMER. What is it?

Mr. ABBATICCHIO. That is a medal.

Mr. HAMMER. What kind?

Mr. ABBATICCHIO. I do not know the particular kind.

Mr. HAMMER. You are a Catholic?

Mr. ABBATICCHIO. Yes.

Mr. HAMMER. And do not know what that is?

Mr. ABBATICCHIO. I can not see it. I have not my glasses on.

Mr. REID. St. Joseph—do you not know what that is?

Mr. HAMMER. Let us see if you know what that is [handing article to witness].

Mr. ABBATICCHIO. That has St. Benedict on it.

Mr. HAMMER. What is that? Do they sell that?

Mr. ABBATICCHIO. Not in its present condition.

Mr. HAMMER. Do they sell some similar to that?

Mr. ABBATICCHIO. They will sell this and they will sell medals and they will sell crucifixes, prayer books, and holy pictures, but they are just the same, so far as our religion is concerned, as this piece of

paper when they are sold; but you may have them blessed afterwards and the blessing on them is what gives them what we reverence. The article when it is sold does not mean anything more to me as a Catholic, except that it may have the image of Jesus Christ on it, than that mallet in the chairman's hand. [Applause.]

MADAME MARCIA. Allow me to ask him a question. Did you say this is St. Benedict?

MR. ABBATICCHIO. I said I could not see it. I did not have my glasses.

MADAME MARCIA. You say it was not sold in its present condition?

MR. ABBATICCHIO. Unblessed.

MADAME MARCIA. No, sir; it was blessed and sold.

MR. ABBATICCHIO. I beg your pardon.

MADAME MARCIA. Then you can call it a confession, for a rose by any other name smells sweet. It was blessed and given to me by a Catholic woman, to find lost and stolen articles.

When I appeared in the Senate, I lost all my papers, and, apropos of that, I would like to say, in answer to this witness, Miss Mackenberg, that there was a number of letters, any number of letters, that went into the newspaper office protesting against me. I have in my possession, which I have every reason to believe was a part of their plan, a letter from the editor of the News, Mr. Glassner, asking me to write a daily horoscope, as there was none other being published in the city, and I refused to do it. Mr. Glassner talked to me again and again over the telephone, and never has he in any way made a complaint or told me that I was damaged.

MR. HOUDINI. Was not that before I arrived and opened his eyes?

MADAME MARCIA. But your letters were being published in the paper at that time.

Now, I lost that in the Black and White taxicab coming to the Senate investigation, and, Anthony—I have offered him all kinds of money to give it to me, because I knew that I would never duplicate it, but he had not found it for me so far.

MR. REID. Did you go to some medium or Spiritualist?

MADAME MARCIA. No, I did not. I would rather not make the attack, because it is well known who controls the Black and White taxicabs and why I did not recover it.

MR. REID. A man named Brown.

MADAME MARCIA. But I still am in hopes that I may, and I am going to give Anthony that tainted money.

MR. ABBATICCHIO. I am not speaking for each individual Catholic in the world. I am speaking of the church—of the Catholic teaching. I do not deny the fact, as you have stated it, if you state it as a fact, that somebody gave it to you for the purpose of helping you to find something, but I do say that the Catholic church, in its teaching, does not sell charms.

MADAME MARCIA. But you said, in its present state.

MISS COATES. I just want to say, in making that remark, that I made it for the protection of the Roman Catholic church, that I thought they had a right to do in their religion exactly what they wanted, and if this bill infringes upon it, then they ought to be here to say something about it, because I wanted that question settled.

I believe in the Roman Catholic protection. My father was a Catholic and I believe strongly in the power of thought, and I know

that the concentrated thoughts of all the Catholics all over the world are putting in the Pope of Rome a tremendous power, I hope for good.

I have with me, and have carried with me during this trial, my father's crucifix which was blessed by the Pope of Rome, and I believe in the power of the cross of Christ to protect you from evil.

So I was not saying that with any aspersion to the Roman Catholic faith, but because I believe in the power of that cross that was blessed, I believe in the power of the blessing of the one church, as all good Spiritualists believe in the blessing of any good spirit from the high planes of heaven, but we do not believe in the protection of spirits from the lower plane. We recognize them as evil appearances, and use the power of good against the evil.

MR. REID. You have a lower level in your spiritual world?

MISS COATES. Yes; we have that in all worlds, and it is only lived after death.

MR. HAMMER. The original Houdini was a Hindu, was he not?

MR. HOUDINI. No.

MR. HAMMER. You are Houdini the second?

MR. HOUDINI. No.

MR. HAMMER. You are the original Houdini?

MR. HOUDINI. No; the original Houdini was a French clock maker.

MR. HAMMER. I thought he lived in Allahabab.

MR. HOUDINI. Are you joking?

MR. HAMMER. No; I am in earnest.

MR. HOUDINI. His name was Eugene Houden. My name is Houdini.

MR. HAMMER. Your real name is Harry Weiss?

MR. HOUDINI. My legal name is Harry Houdini, by law of the United States of America many years ago.

MR. HAMMER. But your real name is Harry Weiss?

MR. HOUDINI. My legal name is Harry Houdini.

MR. HAMMER. Were you born in Philadelphia?

MR. HOUDINI. No, sir. I was born in Appleton, Wis.

MR. HAMMER. Was that your father here the other day?

MR. HOUDINI. No.

MR. HAMMER. It has been circulated that it was.

MR. HOUDINI. No; that man is a Catholic and I am a son of a rabbi. His name is Weiss. That is a coincidence.

MR. HAMMER. Was not your name originally Weiss?

MR. HOUDINI. I was born under that name.

MR. HAMMER. You said the other day that you were president of the Magicians' Association of America.

MR. HOUDINI. Society of American Magicians.

MR. HAMMER. Is there an international association of that kind?

MR. HOUDINI. I am looked upon as the national president, but I am not—

MR. HAMMER (interposing). Is it a secret organization?

MR. HOUDINI. No; only regarding our exploits.

MR. HAMMER. Have you any branches in foreign countries? In Russia?

MR. HOUDINI. Not in Russia.

- Mr. HAMMER. Germany?
- Mr. HOUDINI. No.
- Mr. HAMMER. Have you ever been in British India?
- Mr. HOUDINI. Never in my life; no, sir.
- Mr. HAMMER. You have been in Paris?
- Mr. HOUDINI. Yes, sir.
- Mr. HAMMER. Did you find any of the members of this society of magicians when you were there?
- Mr. HOUDINI. Yes; we have members all over the world.
- Mr. HAMMER. Is America the head of the membership?
- Mr. HOUDINI. Yes.
- Mr. HAMMER. Is it an international association?
- Mr. HOUDINI. We have members living in foreign countries belonging to it.
- Mr. HAMMER. Were both of your parents Hebrews?
- Mr. HOUDINI. Yes, sir.
- Mr. HAMMER. Your present residence, I believe, is in New York City?
- Mr. HOUDINI. Yes, sir.
- Mr. HAMMER. Did you say that the Magicians' Association is not a secret order?
- Mr. HOUDINI. Yes, sir.
- Mr. HAMMER. Is it chartered?
- Mr. HOUDINI. Yes, sir.
- Mr. HAMMER. Where? By what State?
- Mr. HOUDINI. New York. I will give you the secretary's address.
- Mr. HAMMER. I do not care about that.
- Did you say you knew the secretary's name and address?
- Mr. HOUDINI. Yes. Richard Van Deen, 230 Union Street, Jersey City.
- Mr. HAMMER. Is your father living?
- Mr. HOUDINI. No, sir. Has this anything to do with this bill?
- Mr. HAMMER. No; but—
- Mr. HOUDINI (interposing). I know that you are asking spiritualistic questions and I want to let you know I know it.
- Mr. HAMMER. No. I have been told that your people came from British India. That is all I was trying to find out. It is contended here that you are a medium and do not know it. These people really believe that you have divine power and that you won't admit it. That is the reason I am asking you these questions.
- Mr. HOUDINI. Pardon me.
- Mr. HAMMER. Have you ever been in Allahabab?
- Mr. HOUDINI. No, sir.
- Mr. HAMMER. You have read the Arabian Nights stories?
- Mr. HOUDINI. Yes, sir.
- Mr. HAMMER. But you have never been there?
- Mr. HOUDINI. No, sir.
- Mr. HAMMER. You have been to Hawaii and Tokyo?
- Mr. HOUDINI. I have been to Hawaii. I have gone around the world, but I only touched the principal ports.
- Mr. HAMMER. Where were you in 1925?
- Mr. HOUDINI. In America.
- Mr. HAMMER. You were not out of America that year?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes, sir.

Mr. HAMMER. Did you do any work in Alaska at any time?

Mr. HOUDINI. No, sir.

Mr. HAMMER. Did you ever know a man by the name of Hugh Weir, on Collier's Magazine?

Mr. HOUDINI. Never heard the name before.

Mr. HAMMER. Did you ever know a man by the name of D'Alory Fechetti, a celebrated Frenchman in Paris?

Mr. HOUDINI. Not that I know of.

Mr. HAMMER. Is William J. Burns a member of your association?

Mr. HOUDINI. He may—

Miss SAWYER (interposing). No.

Mr. HOUDINI. She knows every member of the organization.

Mr. HAMMER. Have you any association with the movies and theaters in connection with this Association of American Magicians?

Mr. HOUDINI. Just what do you mean?

Mr. HAMMER. Have you any relation and has your association anything to do with the movie association and theater association of America?

These questions I am asking you were not inspired by any Spiritualists.

Mr. HOUDINI. You did not get those out of the air. Why are you asking me those peculiar, irrelevant questions? They haven't anything to do with the bill and are not the kind of questions that a man in your position would ask. They were given to you by some rabid medium and I am surprised that you should ask me same. You did not make them up yourself. I am surprised that you should ask me those questions. You did not get them out of your head.

Mr. HAMMER. That is all right as to where I got them, but I did not get them from any spiritualist, and I did not get them from any divine power either, because I do not claim that God makes revelations to me and I am sure that the devil did not inspire them.

There is a system of 3's and 7's—numerology. Did you have anything to do with numerology? Do you know anything about it? The figure 3, you know, as numerology says, represents a serpent.

Mr. HOUDINI. I do not believe in that truck—in numerology.

Mr. HAMMER. You do not believe in that any more than you do in astrology or fortune-telling or soothsaying?

Mr. HOUDINI. All in the same junk basket.

Mr. HAMMER. You do not know, then, what numerology teaches?

Mr. HOUDINI. I know what it teaches.

Mr. HAMMER. What 7 means?

Mr. HOUDINI. Seven days in the week.

Mr. HAMMER. And what 3 means and what the significance of 33 is? There is none of that in any of your performances? It is all really tricks and sleight of hand?

Mr. HOUDINI. Yes, sir.

Mr. HAMMER. I am very much obliged to you.

Mr. HOUDINI. You are very welcome. I am very happily married, 52 years of age, well to do, and very proud—

Mr. REID (interposing). And very proud of your wife, or try to make us think so.

Now let us have the further testimony on the bills, since we have all encomiums before the committee.

Mr. HOUDINI. Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, I assure you that I have not any malice in this at all. I respect every genuine believer in spiritualism. I pledge my sacred word of honor as a man that when I meet a real believer, I respect him.

Mr. REID. Are those what you call the "shut eyes"?

Mr. HOUDINI. The "shut eyes." I must respect them. I can tell a "shut eye" in two sentences, and I treat them accordingly.

I want everybody to know that there is no personal feeling. There is not any grudge against it. There is just back in my mind the thought that the Government ought to know of some of the things that are going on. Those real believers in spiritualism will some day thank me for helping them wipe out the bad ideas. When a medium——

Mr. REID (interposing). I would like to have you confine your remarks, as far as you can, to show why the evidence given against the bill is not worthy of belief and how these specific things should be considered by the committee in making up their minds whether or not to report this bill favorably.

Mr. HOUDINI. The evidence to support the bill is of such a nature that I can take anyone or a committee and prove that they are simply working for this bill, and not knowing it, that they are absolutely with me and they do not know it.

Mrs. Fletcher, I know, is positively 100 per cent sincere. I know that. I respect her very much. I must respect her, but I also know that she is honestly mistaken. There is no human being living that can make a trumpet float in the air unless by trickery.

Mrs. GRANT. I have it in my own home.

Mr. SCHARBAU. You are invited to my seance, and my wife is not a paid medium, but we will show you.

Mr. HOUDINI. I have been told that there is a string to my \$10,000. Well, there is no string to the Scientific American's money. Why have not the mediums in the past two and a half years gone to the Scientific American? It is true that the offer is closed, but I am representing Mr. O. D. Munn as one of the committee, and I know that Dr. Morton Prince, of the Journal of Psychology, will offer his \$5,000 to any medium, and if you can find any medium who will float a trumpet in the light I will pay \$10,000.

Mr. SCHARBAU. My presence alone would be enough to break up any seance if I am determined to do so, and we are sending messages by radio at night and receiving them a great deal better than in the daytime.

Mrs. GRANT. I have been a medium for 40 years. I lived in this city 22 years and I lived 20 years in Baltimore and I was 3 years at Newport News and practiced mediumship. We have a trumpet in my daughter's home. I feared she would get trumpet manifestations, but we bought the trumpet, sent for the trumpet, and my daughter has a trumpet by the bed in her room, and we sleep room to room and the trumpet comes up and speaks names.

Mr. REID. Is that so?

Mrs. GRANT. Yes.

(At this point a trumpet was produced by Mr. Houdini and placed on the table, applause following.)

Mr. REID. I think we ought to confine the applause to what I say and not to what the witnesses say or do.

Mrs. Fox. I want to say that I am not a medium, but a spiritualist, and I have had for the last 15 years seances in my own home. I have had them in the dark and in the light, and it is absolutely false for Mr. Houdini to say that all mediums are fakes. That is not true.

Mr. REID. Can you make this trumpet——

Mrs. Fox (interposing). I am not a medium.

Mr. REID. I want the ones to speak up who are going to make this trumpet talk.

Mrs. GRANT. You can not do it in that way.

Mrs. Fox. You have to make your conditions.

Mrs. GRANT. My spiritualism means a great deal more to me than that gentleman. My daughter can do it.

Mr. REID. Is your daughter here?

Mrs. GRANT. Yes, sir. She is no medium; she does not demonstrate.

Mr. REID. Now, somebody said that they could make the trumpet float under conditions. I will appoint a special select committee under any conditions that you name so that we may have the demonstration. Now, we will let you pick your own committee and your own time and place and all the conditions——

Mrs. GRANT (interposing). I do not see why the spiritualists have to demonstrate when the other denominations do not.

Mr. HOUDINI. Mr. Chairman——

Mr. MYERS. He has had four or five chances. I would like to say something.

Mr. REID. I never saw or heard of you before a minute ago.

Mr. MYERS. I have asked Reverend Strack.

Mr. REID. Did he communicate it to me?

Mr. MYERS. Not as yet.

Mr. REID. Do not be impatient. I never saw you before; I do not know how good you are. [Laughter.] Do you think you are good enough to have 10 minutes?

Mr. MYERS. Yes, sir; I do.

STATEMENT OF CHARLES WILLIAM MYERS

Mr. MYERS. I am not the man who gave the spiritualists' temple away.

Mr. REID. What is your business?

Mr. MYERS. I am photostatic operator for the United States Government, United States Treasury.

Mr. REID. How long have you been employed in that capacity?

Mr. MYERS. I have been in that particular capacity for the last 10 years, but not in that particular department.

Mr. REID. Do you claim to be a spiritualist?

Mr. MYERS. In fact, all my life.

Mr. REID. Still are?

Mr. MYERS. I am still; and always will be.

Mr. REID. And does that help you in your work?

Mr. MYERS. It helps me in my work and daily occupation.

Mr. REID. Do you want to testify in regard to the bill?

Mr. MYERS. To protest against the bill.

Mr. REID. You may proceed.

Mr. MYERS. The first thing I want to ask Mr. Houdini is if he knows Mrs. Burling, of Detroit, Mich., who frequents between Chicago and Detroit, the trumpet medium? Come ahead; get busy.

Mr. HOUDINI. I want to find out if there is a murder case—it is in my notes.

Yes, I know; in Detroit, a little lady.

Mr. MYERS. No; not too little.

Mr. HOUDINI. Then I do not know her.

Mr. MYERS. You have visited the lady several times.

Mr. REID. Then he ought to know it.

Mr. MYERS. Because I have been in the city of Detroit when she has told me, and also in this city——

Mr. HOUDINI. No.

Mr. MYERS. I said Detroit.

Mr. HOUDINI. That is quite right.

Mr. REID. Do not lecture him.

Mr. MYERS. I would like to lecture him. I want to say this, that I have been following this case from the start of this hearing——

Mr. REID (interposing). What case?

Mr. MYERS. This here, on this bill, and what I think about this here bill as a law is that it is an attack, that religion, organized religion outside of spiritualism is trying to down spiritualism.

Mr. REID. You do not mean that—organized religion?

Mr. MYERS. I do.

Mr. REID. You do not mean that—organized religion?

Mr. MYERS. He is just one little drop of it. I want to say this, before I relate something that happened 26 years ago— Yes, you can all whistle; I observed distinctly when Mr. Houdini produced that trumpet on this table here that there was quite a bit of applause, but only from those who were not spiritualists, and I can plainly see, by observation and study, what the denomination is.

Mr. REID. Some of these are Members of Congress, and you will have to excuse them.

Mr. MYERS. I am not saying anything about their denomination, but I want to say this, that they are trying their very best to down spiritualism.

In the beginning, 3,000 years ago, or 2,000, Judas betrayed Christ. He was a Jew, and I want to say that this bill is being put through by two—well, you can use your opinion; I am not making any assertion.

Mr. REID. How much are they getting?

Mr. MYERS. I am not saying money. It is the influence that is back of them.

I want to say this. Twenty-six years ago a young man went into a meeting, and possibly Houdini knows this man—his name was Buzzard, of Pittsburgh, and a young man went into that room. It was a class of spiritualism and materialists.

Now, you can listen to this, because you can get a lot out of this, folks. [Laughter.]

Laugh! I am glad you do, because it opens your minds up.

This young man went into this class, and Mr. Buzzard said to him, "Young man, your grandmother—I take it it is your grandmother, because she is old and gray—stands right alongside of you," and he described her to the young man, and he said, "There is also an old gentleman with her," and he said that they were husband and wife, grandmother and grandfather, and he said, "They tell me, before this meeting takes place, that I must tell you something. You are anticipating doing something, and if you do it you will be shot."

He was prophesying. That medium was prophesying to that young man. That young man had figured, having been in bad company, on doing something that was not right, and he had planned, individually himself, in his own mind, what he was going to do, to do a job—I mean of robbery—had planned it himself, and these spirits came back and said to him before this had taken place, "If you do this, you will be shot," and the young man did not do that. He changed from that time on. [Laughter.]

I hope you all laugh; I hope you do; but I will tell you that you will think of this many a time.

That is 26 years ago. But I will tell you one thing: I am that young man, and I am not ashamed to say it. [Applause.]

From that time on I commenced to investigate spiritualism. If I had looked for fraud, I could have found lots of it, but I heard a friend tell me that there is a good medium at such and such a place, and I went, and I want to say right here that I never paid over 50 cents in my life for any kind of a sitting. You can get \$2, \$3, \$5, or \$10 sittings. They are not worth it. It is the two-bit sittings that I go to. [Laughter.]

I mean it, and I will explain why. You can get a real, genuine medium as reasonable as you want. These people that sit for high prices—it is all right with them, if they want that kind of a reading, but I do not care for that kind. I want the kind that is going to do me good.

This is nothing more than an attempt of organized religion to down spiritualism, and if you put this bill through you are starting the same old things that happened in the Roman days, and it will come again. [Applause.]

Mr. REID. Mr. Houdini will proceed, unless somebody else is to interrupt him.

Mr. HOUDINI. I want to say this, that if any one wants to put up an argument against the bill, I certainly think they ought to be heard, only I do not like to be here all the time.

STATEMENT OF REV. C. V. MARROW, PITTSBURGH, PA.

Mr. REID. What is your name?

Mrs. MARROW. Rev. C. V. Marrow, from Pittsburgh, Pa.

Mr. REID. How long have you been so engaged?

Mrs. MARROW. I have been ordained since 1912. I have been a spiritualist for 34 years, and this is the first time in my life that I ever knew that Constitution of the United States did not respect a religious organization, which spiritualism is. I have been sitting here and my blood has been boiling.

I want to tell you gentlemen, you honorable gentlemen of this committee, that this religion is as sacred to me as any man or woman's religion in the wide world, and I will say this, that I have never questioned any man's religion. His religion is the most sacred part of his life, and if it is not it ought to be.

I am nonsectarian, but I am a spiritualist, and will die one, and I know that I can not understand why spiritualists must be brought on trial. Mr. Weiss, or Mr. Houdini, as he calls himself, has repeatedly said that he is not against spiritualism as a religion. He has brought it up here repeatedly, and I want to say this—why should our workers pay a license when no other religious reader, or anybody else, pays a license? I do not pay a license in the State of Pennsylvania, and I would not pay a license on my religion, because I put my religion on as high a rank as does anybody else in the wide world. It has brought comfort and consolation to me and thousands of others, and my religion is based on the Bible, from Genesis to Revelations, and I want to say to you that you do not understand the first principle of religion or you would not be here mocking and laughing at spiritualism. I can not bear to have any one stand up and mock at any man's religion, whether it be Catholic or Protestant or Jew or Gentile, or whether it be spiritualism or something else.

Spiritualism is a religion out of which thousands of people to-day are getting their comfort and consolation. I have heard it repeatedly said that spiritualists communicate with the dead. I say that they do not. Any man or woman knows that the soul is part of God, the divine spark within us. In the name of God, to peddle our religion in a hearing like this—it has hurt me terribly to think that our religion must be put on trial. I want to ask, by what authority has Mr. Houdini been appointed by God or anyone else to judge of these people, any less than you be adjudged?

I want to say to you, Mr. Houdini, that I have no malice in my heart toward you, and may God and the angels bless you if you are doing the right thing and living a Christ-like life; but, before God, I am a spiritualist and will die one. You may take this old body from me, but I know that souls communicate. I know my loved ones communicate, or I would not be before you, and I would a thousand times rather hear the voices of my departed sons and daughters than take all the millions you could ever give me.

Take me in just a little, God, and let me give the gift You have given, and I will give it freely any time. I have done it thousands of times. I have done missionary work for 34 years, and I have had my little band to keep, and I defy any man or woman to say that I have ever taken money wrongfully. I have taken money for my time; but it seems too much when we are placed on trial here. To think that our religion must be aired here and put down to the records before us, and before God, I know many of them are not true. [Applause.]

I wish to say, too, that I am not here to play on any one's sympathy. I am for the honest principle just as much as any minister that ever was ordained under God's sky, and I took the sacred vow to stand for the truth until the end, and the truth I will stand for, and when God takes this old body from me, I hope that I may be near my children and coach them.

I have had the proof of the continuity of life, and I have not communicated with the dead, but my loved ones live. God I know lives, the God of love and truth.

I did not want to say a word to-night, but I just could not stand it. It was too much for me. My religion is just as grand and holy to me as to any man or woman in this place or in any other place in all the world, and our religion should not be at stake.

You say it is not our religion.

Mr. SCHARBAU. It is our religion.

Mrs. MARROW. Now, I won't say that we are legally organized, and I have a number of workers under me, but are there not fakes in other religions?

Not long ago I read in the newspapers about two ministers that stepped on the wrong side of the path, and I want to say to you, friends, in all seriousness before God and the religious world, that some of you need a great awakening, and you will never have it until you are standing at the brink of death and know where your loved ones are. I know that is where I stood, and I know God has answered me, and I believe in the risen Christ and my loved ones live and they walk and talk with me. They are not dead. They are in my soul, and commune with me daily.

I thank you. [Applause.]

Mr. REID. You do not object to the proposition?

Mrs. MARROW. If that bill is not camouflaged to interfere with our workers, I think it should go through.

Mr. REID. Your suggestion is that there be an amendment to this that it shall not apply to spiritualism?

Mrs. MARROW. I thoroughly feel it should be put in there.

Mr. REID. Spiritualism as a religion?

Mrs. MARROW. Spiritualism as a religion.

Mr. REID. We will insert it in there for you. Tell me what your phraseology is.

Mr. SCHARBAU. That the spiritualists should practise their religion, and should be allowed——

Mr. REID (interposing). I do not think it applies to it.

Doctor STRACK. I will give you a provision, the same as was offered to the Senate.

Mr. REID. Have you an amendment prepared?

Doctor STRACK. I will give it the same as it was accepted by the Senate committee. [Reading:]

Provided, That the provisions of this act shall not be construed to include, prohibit, or interfere with the exercise of the spiritual functions or offices of any priest, minister, or accredited representative of any religion.

Mr. HAMMER. It has to be general in its application.

STATEMENT OF MRS. C. H. STONE

Mr. REID. And what is your name?

Mrs. STONE. Mrs. C. H. Stone.

Mr. REID. Now, if you will please give us your address.

Mrs. STONE. 3559 Tenth Street NW.

Mr. REID. What is your occupation?

Mrs. STONE. Just a housewife.

Mr. REID. You are interested in this subject?

Mrs. STONE. I am interested in spiritualism from every standpoint. It has been a comfort to me through a great many ills and sorrows connected with my home life.

Mr. REID. You do not understand that that is in question under this bill?

Mrs. STONE. I understand that. Secondly, I know——

Mr. REID (interposing). The reason I let these speakers go on is that I thought it would do some of the Members of Congress good to get some spiritual uplift. I do not think it is germane to the bill. So, if you have anything——

Mrs. STONE (interposing). I have, in regard to the inspiration, in regard to everything of the uplift nature.

Mr. REID. Have you anything specific as to the bill?

Mr. HAMMER. It has been contended here that we have religion on trial. No member of the committee ever had in mind anything about anyone's religion. Everybody wants them to enjoy their religion. We are not trying your religion. It is you and some of the witnesses that have raised that.

Mrs. STONE. The thing in question, as I understand, is, how are you going to detect the fakes and to get rid of them, if you can?

Mr. HAMMER. That is it. That is the question I asked in the beginning.

Mrs. STONE. Yes. Now, many people in this work are kind-hearted. They wish to do good, such as Mr. Houdini does, I suppose. We will take it for granted that he is doing good to us, as people of the United States. At least he expressed himself as such. Consequently, if the outcome of this investigation does do good, we shall thank him, as he said.

The public are too slow, generally, to understand development under these instances.

In the nature of inspiration, as this gentleman to the left spoke of many times, there are wonderful stories written. There are doctors who are able to prescribe to their patients; there are always people to get their diseases diagnosed; there are different occupations, able to be given a more original idea of thought; and we wonder where this comes from.

It must come from some divine source, and, without this divine source, what would we do? We would grow dead. It is the nature of all these people to believe in this as our spiritual advice, that it comes from a divine source, and each one that can do anything to help the other one, or themselves, is blessed from some unknown source, or he could not do it.

I have seen a materialization last summer in St. Louis. I had a private sitting, and I had always wanted to know the truth. I asked questions about my own family. I asked questions about business. I was answered absolutely true. I have proven it. I have watched the party that told me of the spirits that returned to me—there were seven. One was my mother. She sang for me, "He Leadeth Me."

I have a witness to this effect in St. Louis. I found this woman that gave this materialization by accident. I said to my husband,

"Come, now, let us go to a spiritualist church and I will prove to you, if possible, that there is no fake in it, because they do not know us. We are strangers, and if they give us any message at all, why, we can tell whether it is a fake or not."

But, privately, I should love to explain this more fully, that is, in reference to where the religious part comes in, if one would consider it in a religious light, which many people do. I consider it a comfort to be enlightened by our spirit forces for our advancement in everyday life, business, pleasures, health, and making us able to keep sweet within, knowing you will be guided aright if you are willing to be still and listen, not always to hear a real voice, but to get the right impression. It has helped me many times in business and to bring a sweeter vibration around me to withstand misjudgment in my belief.

So, he said, "All right; I will." He went with me.

I had a seat given me by accident right close to the medium. She had traveled 350 miles that day to get to that meeting that evening.

She said to me, "You are going on a short trip, and then you are going on a long trip, and it is going to be a wonderful development."

I said, "Does it entail moving"? And she said, "Yes," and that about ended the message to me, and I wondered, of course, where this short trip came in and this long trip came in, but I did know that I came to St. Louis on purpose, to take a trip to California on a land deal. She was right about that long trip, but as to the short trip, I did not know where it was coming in.

My husband was going back, so I said I was going to stay a few days longer. This woman had said that she had clairvoyant circles and also seances and materialization, so I said I was going to stay and see this. My husband went home, and I went to see the woman, and in a reading, as you would call it, a short time afterwards, she said to me, "Why didn't you go home"? I said, "Why, did you expect me to go?" She said, "Yes."

And then I saw through the whole thing. She meant that I should take the short trip back to Washington from St. Louis, and then go from Washington on to the coast. I did not do as she meant on that advice, because I used my own material mind. The spirit forces would have had me do that, because it would have meant better things for me, coming back home as I intended to, and there came the message that it entailed the moving. Consequently, my husband was supposed to move while I was away, and he did not do it, and that would have made the message true just the same, but I did decide that I would not go to the coast until I had come back home, so it positively proved her message to be true, and I did so because I had spent so much time in St. Louis, with my papers to be fixed all over before I went West. So that proved that absolutely to myself.

MR. REID. That proved it to you?

MRS. STONE. That proved it to me, and during the materialization, as I said, my mother sang, "He Leadeth Me," beautifully for me. Two spirits, a gentleman's mother whom I never saw, but I knew the gentleman well, and my own mother, came to me, walked from the corner where the materialization took place and touched my head with their hand. Their robes were like this [indicating], their faces

were uncovered, and their heads were covered with something white like their robes; their robes were flowing.

I thought that I would find out if there was a fake there, that I was going to see for myself, so I touched the garment with my hand, and I felt just a creepy substance, so I thought I was sure that that part was all right, anyway.

Mr. REID. A creepy substance?

Mrs. STONE. A creepy substance, you know, just like when it would be creepy—like crêpe de chine of a heavier substance would be—I expect you know. It is like this material would be [indicating], but much heavier.

Mr. REID. Where did you see that?

Mrs. STONE. I took hold of the garment of the spirit that walked to me and touched me.

Mr. REID. And you felt his garment?

Mrs. STONE. Yes—I could have felt it, anyway, but I took the sleeve. Consequently I was sure I was right there. I wanted to be sure; I was not going to be faked, because I want the truth. So that circle was over, and I immediately sat down in the room. This took place in the basement of this woman's house. There was no opening whatever, because I went around and looked. We had to go up from her cellar into the kitchen to get out of this room, and there was a light in the room when the seance was on.

Now, this woman was a very large woman, weighed about 300 pounds, and she threw so many electrons from her body threw the ether, and this room, being so finely magnetized, for she held those seances frequently, the electrons from her body helped to materialize these spirits.

If you take scientific research and go back into these things, as I have, you will know I am telling the truth, and I wanted to know if it would be possible that people could come back. I know all things are possible with God, and if people can come back and we can get messages which we can hear with our ears and see with our eyes, why should not we believe? If it is a comfort to you or to me or to the world, why should we close it down?

Now, the fakes come this way. People want to make money, and they are not highly developed enough to be true, and say, "I will accept nothing but what I get honestly." Suppose 10 telegrams were sent in this room from some one to you, each telegram telling the same thing exactly.

Mr. REID. We get those every day.

Mrs. STONE. Yes, of course, you do—the same message every day, written by different people?

Mr. REID. Had one to-day on the McFadden bill.

Mrs. STONE. But did you get 10 on the same bill?

Mr. REID. Yes.

Mrs. STONE. And were they written exactly the same way, and did they mean the same thing?

Mr. REID. Sent by the same propaganda.

Mrs. STONE. But did they mean the same thing? You had to interpret them your way. That is what mediums have to do. They have to interpret messages the best way that they can; if they happen to get one message on a subject one way and they get it

another way then they have to use their common sense, and no woman has to be fooled out of \$60,000 of money on account of a medium.

Mr. REID. It was not a woman, but a man. You would never fool a woman that way.

Mrs. STONE. I am glad you say that. Consequently, this thing of being fooled remains many times, as this gentleman said, that we are dumb, we are dense, we are thick-headed, and only by development—

Mr. REID (interposing). I am going to confess—

Mrs. STONE (interposing). And we all want to be developed psychically, morally, and mentally.

CLOSING STATEMENT OF HARRY HOUDINI

Mr. HOUDINI. Mr. Chairman, I think there has been enough said. In closing my support for the bill I wish to say that there are 500,000 voteless people here in the District of Columbia. The law as presented there positively does not interfere with anyone's religious beliefs. They do put in jokers in laws the way they have in a number of States, and there is one that I would like to warn the committee against. When I say "warn," I want to amend that. I want to read it as the joker law that they have in a number of States. Here it is:

They have in the fortune-telling bill, Mr. Chairman and ladies and gentlemen, this clause—but let me read this first:

That whoever shall obtain money or property from another by holding himself out as skilled in fortune-telling by means of card reading, clairvoyancy, astrology, spirit mediumship, or any occult science, or by any other devices or practices whereby money is obtained from the general public by occult or psychic powers, shall for each offense be fined not exceeding \$500.

Now, here is the joker in the law placed in there by the spiritualistic associations:

Provided, That the provisions of this act shall not be construed to include, prohibit, or interfere with the exercise of the spiritual functions or office of any priest, minister, or accredited representative of any religion: *And provided further*, That the provisions of this act shall not be construed to include or refer to the practice of the belief known as spiritualism or to any attempt at communication with the spirit world by or through these occult mediums.

I claim, Mr. Chairman and ladies and gentlemen, that this absolutely gives the spiritualist a 100 per cent power to tell fortunes and do everything. One counteracts the other.

Doctor Strack said that according to the laws of Illinois—and correct me if I am wrong—if a certain fraudulent medium escaped jail because she belonged to a certain spiritualistic church—

Doctor STRACK (interposing). I did not say she belonged. She claimed she was a spiritualist, and that is the clause that our chief counsel asked me to strike out of that amendment that I have offered.

Mr. HOUDINI. Therefore, in connection with the bill that was turned down by Governor Al Smith, Governor Smith said this in his memorandum:

The code of criminal procedure to-day declares that persons pretending to tell fortunes of where lost or stolen goods may be found are disorderly persons. This bill seeks to make them orderly persons provided they are performing the

rite or rites, or exercising the privileges, or performing the duties of any branch of the ministry of any religious order. In operation it would arbitrarily select a relatively small number of persons and give them immunity from prosecution. Regarding it in that light, I am unable to resist the conclusion that it violates the Constitution of the United States.

Mr. REID. What does Al Smith know about violating the Constitution of the United States?

Mr. HOUDINI. I am only repeating what he said. I do not know.

Miss COATES. Will you ask him what Al Smith has to do with the District of Columbia?

Mr. HOUDINI. That is the one you are trying to get in the District of Columbia. Do you want me to read it? This is practically the same, word for word—

Mr. REID (interposing). Yes.

Mr. HOUDINI (reading):

Persons pretending to tell fortunes, or where lost or stolen goods may be found; but the words "pretending to tell fortunes," as used in this subdivision, shall not be construed to mean or include any word or words used by any person while performing the rite or rites or exercising the privileges or performing the duties of any branch of the ministry of any religious order or church incorporated pursuant to the religious corporations law of the State of New York.

And he said it violates the Constitution of the United States because it is class legislation.

Mr. REID. The law, or the exception?

Mr. HOUDINI. This law that they are trying to pass in New York.

Mr. REID. Then they have not any law in New York?

Mr. HOUDINI. They have a law. This is an amendment, to make an exception to it.

I have not anything more.

Mrs. Fox. Why should this bill be made to suit Houdini?

Mr. HOUDINI. I am calling attention to the fraudulent practices.

Now—are you Doctor Strack?

Doctor STRACK. Some call me "Doctor," but my title is "Reverend."

Mr. HOUDINI. Reverend Strack, this morning you stated that I protected the Davenport brothers, because they were friends of mine. I wish to put in evidence what I have written, and to state that the Davenport brothers never claimed to be spirit mediums.

And you stated that Reverend Weiss, of Philadelphia, who is no relative of mine, said he kicked the book up and it floated in the air.

Doctor STRACK. I did not say Davenport did, but Slade did, and he demonstrated it—

Mr. HOUDINI (interposing). You are wrong, and I wish to correct it by having copied from this book from pages 94 to 100 of "A Magician Among the Spirits," wherein Reverend Weiss makes affidavit to be incorporated. [Applause.]

(The excerpt referred to is as follows:)

AUGUST 18, 1923.

MY DEAR HOUDINI: Please accept from me this lock-book, and the locked double slate, as a small token of comradeship, in combating spiritualistic deception, popular superstition, and delusion.

The book and the slate were my own. I put the lock and hinges on the slate, and prepared the book and a number of other different objects—

Such as Professor Zollner had; when he in his foolishness was pleased to be deceived by Doctor Slade's humbug.

In order to gain the perfect, full confidence of Doctor Slade, and to have him give a seance in my home, and in order to counteract and overcome his explicit aversion as to do writing on or between a sealed slate or a locked book, I showed him letters from two eminent and confiding spiritist authors, Dr. Heinrich Tiedemann, and Tiedemann's intimate friend, Hudson Tuttle, promising to me that they would be present at that seance, at 148 Fairmount Avenue.

Doctor Slade had handled and inspected that book and slate, during a seance at my residence at 148 Fairmount Avenue, Philadelphia, Pa., where I, together with Mr. Wertheimer, then a student of jurisprudence, and in presence of other witnesses (who were concealed and not seen, nor suspected by Doctor Slade, nor his "spirits" detected the manipulations, pedalations (foot, leg, and other bodily movements) and the general modus operandi of his simple legerdemain at the seance. I had ready, for that seance, three different suites of furniture, and thus I found out that he would, or could, perform only at, or on, a certain kind of, plain, square, or drop-leaf table and ordinary wooden chairs or cane seat chairs.

Each person present at seance, wrote, independent of and before communicating with the others, a personal, individual report of the seance and signed it within the next few days. A day or two after, I put these papers in my pocket and also another paper I had prepared to serve or use as Doctor Slade's confession to be signed by him. I went to the Girard Hotel, Room 24, northwest corner of 9th and Chestnut Streets, Philadelphia, Pa., to have Doctor Slade arrested for obtaining money under false pretenses, or to get him to sign his own confession. There, in his room, No. 24, in the Girard Hotel, I had another, a different seance, with Doctor Slade. He again carefully scrutinized the book and the slate, and then, holding the book under the table, secretly and carefully, attempted to open the lock with a small key, hidden in his handkerchief.

Doctor Slade and his pretended spirits could not write in the book. While holding it under the table, he attempted to pull out of the book that thin, wooden, square frame I had put there at the edges of the leaves so that the small piece of lead pencil could move about. Then, in a similar attempt, he worked and perspired, on, and over the double slate. His spirits could not write in the locked slate and he could not open it.

He said "The spirits seem to be angry at your skepticism, it's no use to lose more time by trying. My guide don't want to have anything more to do with you."

Then upon Doctor Slade's request I unlocked the slate, and he wrote in the ordinary way, as writing generally is done in schools, two short sentences in the slate. Then he worked the sponge. As he reached for the sponge, which had been placed purposely on center of table, he held slate just below range of vision and with the reaching for sponge, twisted slate around, blank side on top and pretended to wipe off the sentence he had "read", when in fact he had written something entirely different. And turning the written side downward, sleight-of-hand trick, tried to palm this off, claiming that this is "Genuine, independent, spirit slate writing."

Up to this time, November the 4, 1882, I had shown to Doctor Slade friendly, joyful attentiveness. We talked about some of my newspaper articles I had published some weeks before he consented to give me a seance.

In these newspapers I had described him, Doctor Slade, as "The Modern Cagliostro, a celebrated necromancer, martyr or a charlatan, of radical free-religious proclivities, fine manners and a humorous, witty and forceful public lecturer and most powerful spiritistic medium; who again and again has been and is challenging exposures, and calling special attention to the fact that Doctor Slade has, in his lectures, and otherwise, again and again publicly announced that he is prepared to pay \$1,000 to any person that can prove that he, Doctor Slade, is a humbug, or that Doctor Slade's "manifestations" are trickery, legerdemain, humbug or in any way fraudulent."

Doctor Slade seemed to be pleased by my description. After some pleasant talk as to his appearance with scientists, kings, and other royal persons and rulers in Europe and his success as a lecturer and his way of living, he gave me his address, No. 221 West Twenty-second Street, New York.

Then I asked Doctor Slade that we change rôles, he to take my place and be the investigator and I to play the "medium," there, in his room, as an "experiment."

Doctor Slade also said that if I could overcome my skepticism I would be a good "psychic," having "mediumistic" gifts.

I suggested that he should watch me carefully and then honestly tell me, as to the effect and impression my manifestations could or would be producing on his mind, and eventually on the outcome of the "spiritualistic, the harmonial, philosophy, or so-called, scientific religion of the Spirits."

Then, to his consternation, I, earnestly, by actual demonstration, reproduced every one of his manifestations, exactly, and by the same *modus operandi*, as I, and my witnesses had seen and detected, as Doctor Slade had performed them. He asked me, how, and by what means we detected his "occult," or secret mode, or "process of wonder working," or miracle? I mentioned that he had positively refused to try any "experiment" on the first and second sets of tables and chairs, and had requested me to substitute them by a plain kitchen table and chairs of a certain construction.

I told him that I had bored observation holes in the corners of the panels, particularly so through the lower corners, in the parlor doors, the floor, ceiling and other places from where my concealed witnesses observed, and have seen exactly all the movements of his feet, hands, etc., below and above the table; saw how he raised ("floated") Mr. Wertheimer sitting in the chair, saw how he, Doctor Slade, with his foot upset chairs, kicked a book (extending over the edge of the table), tossed a slate pencil from the edge of the table from a slate held under and at the edge of the table, etc.

Doctor Slade now turned very pale and wiping off the thick perspiration from his forehead and face, said: "Well, what of it?" And rashly asked: "Where were Hudson Tuttle and Dr. H. Tiedemann?" I reminded him of the fact that they had sent an excuse, being unable by reason of unforeseen circumstances to attend that seance in my house.

Then I sternly gave him the alternative, that either he sign his own confession as to the fact that he has during the many years in his career as a professional spirit medium and in everything he had professed or pretended to be "genuine" spiritistic or spiritualistic, deceived and defrauded the public. I read the confession to him and sternly demanded: "Either you sign this or you will be put behind the bars."

"CONFESSIO"

"The undersigned, Henry Slade, known professionally as Dr. Henry Slade, the powerful spiritistic medium, by reason of the force of unfavorable circumstances, years ago became a spiritualistic slate-writing (etc.) medium and spiritistic lecturer, and he herewith confesses that all his pretended spiritualistic manifestations were and are deceptions, performed through tricks.

"(Signed) H. SLADE."

L. R. Weiss had also stipulated that he, Doctor Slade, promises to discontinue his present dishonest, criminal method of gaining a livelihood by preying on the superstition of spiritualists and through the gullibility of the public. Doctor Slade then remonstrated and said that I could not affect his standing in the eyes of those who had seen and believed his manifestations, mentioning the Czar of Russia and others of world prominence.

I then walked to the door, signifying that my part of the interview and argument was ended, and also conveying the impression as to my intention to have him arrested.

He then changed his attitude, and in a cringing manner he pleaded with me to have mercy on him, as he had only this one method of earning a livelihood. All of this, and his pleading, was so strenuous that he fell in a dead faint.

Then, after I revived him out of a genuine fainting spell, he begged me to desist from having him arrested and then he signed the confession.

REMIUS WEISS.

Mr. REID. The committee will now adjourn, to meet at the call of the chairman.

(Whereupon, at 11.35 o'clock p. m., the subcommittee adjourned to meet again at the call of the chairman.)

WASHINGTON, D. C., May 21, 1926.

To the CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
COMMITTEE OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.

GENTLEMEN: In behalf of Mrs. Jentle Brewer, a citizen of the District of Columbia, who is engaged in the practice of palmistry at 1207 E Street, NW., Washington, D. C., under the name of Madam Jeannette, and other persons engaged in similar practice in the District of Columbia I respectfully submit the following brief in opposition to a bill entitled "A bill amending subchapter 5 of the Code of Law of the District of Columbia, as amended to June 7, 1924, relating to offenses against public policy," the same being H. R. 8989, Sixty-ninth Congress, first session, upon which your honorable committee is now holding a public hearing.

In order to a clear discussion of the separate parts of this bill and of the reasons upon which opposition is founded, I quote the bill as printed, to wit:

"A BILL Amending subchapter 5 of the Code of Law of the District of Columbia, as amended to June 7, 1924, relating to offenses against public policy

"Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That subchapter 5 of the Code of Law for the District of Columbia, as amended to June 7, 1924, relating in offenses against public policy, be, and the same is hereby, amended by adding thereto a new section, as follows:

"Any person pretending to tell fortunes; where lost or stolen goods may be found; any person who, by game or device, sleight of hand, pretending, fortune telling, or by any trick or other means, by the use of cards or other implements or instruments, fraudulently obtains from another person property of any description; any person pretending to remove spells, or to sell charms for protection, or to unite the separated, shall be considered a disorderly person. Any person violating the provisions of this law shall be punished by a fine not to exceed \$250 or by imprisonment not to exceed six months, or by both such fine and imprisonment."

THE PRESENT LAW

Since the foregoing bill constitutes remedial legislation, it is necessary in order to judge the necessity for its enactment into law to observe the present state of the law.

The following is quoted from the act of Congress approved July 1, 1902 (32 Stat. 622).

"SEC. 7. That no person shall engage in or carry on any business, trade, profession, or calling in the District of Columbia for which a license tax is imposed by the terms of this section without having first obtained a license so to do.

* * * * *

"PAR. 5. That all licenses granted under the terms of this section must be conspicuously posted on the premises of the licensee. Said licenses shall be accessible at all times for inspection by the police or other officers duly authorized to make such inspections. Licensees having no located place of business shall exhibit their licenses when requested to do so by any of the officers above named.

* * * * *

"PAR. 32. That mediums, clairvoyants, southsayers, fortune tellers, or palmists, by whatsoever name called, conducting business for profit or gain, directly or indirectly, when permitted to practice their calling in the District of Columbia, shall pay a license tax of twenty-five dollars per annum: *Provided*, That no license shall be issued without the approval of the major and superintendent of police.

* * * * *

"PAR. 47. That any person violating any of the provisions of this section shall, on conviction thereof in the police court of the District of Columbia, be punished by a fine of not more than five hundred dollars for each offense, and in default of payment by imprisonment not exceeding 30 days, in the discretion of the court, except as otherwise provided in this section."

From the foregoing it appears that for the past 24 years the classes of persons whose professions and practices are the objects of condemnation in

this proposed legislation having been licensed by the authority of the Congress and have operated subject to the approval of the Superintendent of Police of said District.

As to that part of the bill which deals with obtaining property fraudulently by any of the several means therein stated, the following statutes which are in force in the District of Columbia are quoted.

From the District of Columbia Code.

"SEC. 842. False pretenses: Whoever, by any false pretense, with intent to defraud, obtains from any person anything of value, or procures the execution and delivery of any instrument of writing or conveyance of real or personal property, or the signature of any person, as maker, indorser, or guarantor, to or upon any bond, bill, receipt, promissory note, draft, or check, or any other evidence of indebtedness, and whoever fraudulently sells, barter, or disposes of any bond, bill, receipt, promissory note, draft, or check, or other evidence of indebtedness, for value, knowing the same to be worthless, or knowing the signature of the maker, indorser, or guarantor thereof to have been obtained by any false pretenses, shall, if the value of the property or the sum or value of the money or property mentioned, or described in the instrument so obtained, procured, sold, bartered, or disposed of is thirty-five dollars or upward, be imprisoned not less than one year or not more than three years; or, if less than that sum, shall be fined not more than two hundred dollars or imprisoned for not more than one year."

The attention of the committee is respectfully drawn to sections 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868 and 869 of the District of Columbia Code, in which punishment is provided for the conduct of lotteries, gaming, of all sorts, the setting up of gaming tables, confidence games, betting, etc., in which all of the games, devices and tricks which would fall within the language of the part of the bill under discussion appear embraced. So that, it would appear that the only act condemned by that part of the bill now under discussion for which there is no existing criminal legislation is that relating to "pretending" and "fortune telling." For the convenience of the Committee, I quote below the sections of the Code above referred to:

"SEC. 863. Lotteries: If any person shall within the District keep, set up, or promote, or be concerned as owner, agent, or clerk, or in any other manner, in managing any policy lottery or policy shop, or shall sell or transfer any ricket, certificate, bill, token, or other device purporting or intended to guarantee or assure to any person or entitle him to a chance of drawing or obtaining a prize, to be drawn in any lottery, or in the game or device, or shall, for himself or another person, sell or transfer, or shall aid in selling, exchanging, negotiating, or transferring a chance or ticket in or share of a ticket in any policy lottery or any such bill, certificate, token, or other device, he shall be fined not more than five hundred dollars or be imprisoned not more than three years, or both.

SEC. 864. If any person shall knowingly permit, on any premises under his control in the District, the sale of any chance or ticket in or share of a ticket in any lottery or policy lottery, or shall knowingly permit any lottery or policy lottery or policy shop on such premises, he shall be fined not less than fifty dollars nor more than five hundred dollars, or be imprisoned not more than one year, or both.

SEC. 865. Gaming: Whoever shall in the District set up or keep any gaming table, or any house, vessel, or place, on land or water, for the purpose of gaming, or gambling device commonly called A B C, faro bank, E O, roulette, equality, keno, thimbles, or little joker, or any kind of gaming table or gambling device adapted, devised and designed for the purpose of playing any game of chance for money or property, or shall induce, entice, and permit any person to bet or play at or upon any such gaming table or gambling device, or on the side of or against the keeper thereof, shall be punished by imprisonment for a term of not more than five years.

SEC. 866. Whoever in the District knowingly permits any gaming table, bank, or device to be set up or used for the purpose of gaming in any house, building, vessel, shed, shelter, lot, or other premises to him belonging or by him occupied, or of which at the time he has possession or control, shall be punished by imprisonment in the jail for not more than one year or by a fine not exceeding five hundred dollars, or both.

SEC. 867. Three-card monte, and so forth: Whoever shall in the District deal, play, or practice, or be in any manner accessory to the dealing or practicing, of the confidence game or swindle known as three-card monte, play, or

practice, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall be punished by a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars, and by imprisonment for not more than five years.

SEC. 868. What is Gaming Table.—All games, devices, or contrivances at which money or any other thing shall be bet or wagered shall be deemed a gaming table within the meaning of these sections; and the courts shall construe the preceding sections liberally, so as to prevent the mischief intended to be guarded against.

SEC. 869. Pool Selling, and so forth.—It shall be unlawful for any person or association of persons to bet, gamble, or make books or pools on the result of any trotting or running race of horses, or boat race, or race of any kind, or on any election, or any contest of any kind, or game of base ball. Any person or association of persons violating the provisions of this section shall be fined not exceeding five hundred dollars or be imprisoned not more than ninety days, or both."

SUBSTANCE OF THE BILL

Beginning at line 7, the first clause of the bill is unintelligible unless the word "or" be inserted between the words "fortune" and "where." The second clause of the bill relates to subjects for which there is adequate existing legislation except as to "pretending" and "fortune telling." So read, the subjects which are the objects of the bill's condemnation are:

1. Pretending to tell fortunes.
2. Pretending to tell where lost or stolen goods may be found.
3. By pretending, to fraudulently obtain property.
4. By fortune telling, to fraudulently obtain property.
5. Pretending to remove spells.
6. Pretending to sell charms for protection.
7. Pretending to unite the separated.

We consider these in their order, but first observe that, with the exception of Nos. 3 and 4, the condemnation of the bill is directed wholly against "pretending," whether for a consideration or not, whether by holding out to the public as a profession or in private for amusement, and without regard to the question whether the pretence was relied upon by anybody else, or whether or not such "pretending" resulted in loss or damage to any person. The language of the bill would apparently apply equally to the play of children, the amusement of adults, or the credulity of those who have learned to rely upon premonition and presentiment, of whom there are many.

1. Pretending to tell fortunes, or the telling of fortunes, would include the old game of apple seeds, the tea grounds in the cup, and many other practices. If it be understood to relate to future happenings, affecting the lives of persons, so as to embrace all foretelling, then it will apply to the prognosis of the physician, forecasts of the weather, predictions of the state of the markets, and whether or not she will be happy if married. If we are to be condemned, and fined, and imprisoned for pretending, at least we ought to know what sort of pretense it is that we are condemned for.

2. Pretending to tell where lost or stolen goods may be found is to be made an offense; so that to swear out a search warrant would itself be in violation of the language of the bill; unless the bill is actually intended to convey only a limited meaning which its framers did not see fit to mention.

3. To obtain property fraudulently by pretending. But what is "pretending," standing alone and unless explained. Pretending what? If it relates to future matters, then the clause is repugnant, for it has long been established that one can not well be defrauded by statements as to things to happen in the future, since one man's guess is as good as another's.

4. To obtain property fraudulently by fortune telling presents a knotty problem. If the statements of the fortune teller relate to past or present facts, then there is already legislation to cover it. If the statements relate to future matters only, then this clause falls within the situation discussed in No. 3.

5. Pretending to remove spells, and pretending to sell charms for protection, are matters, so far as they are understood, with which my clients are not especially concerned. It is understood that some persons, of whom there are only a few, suffer the delusion of being under a "spell," and seem to believe that certain "charms" will remove the spell. If this legislation could be

limited to those cases in which money is obtained from persons thus afflicted, it might be well, but this language seems to cover even the innocent practices of large classes of certain religious orders.

7. Pretending to unite the separated is a large pretense. How? When? The separated in life, or the separated in death? Separated what? How separated? The separated are united in marriage, and the married are sometimes united by the parson, or the lawyer, or the psycho-analyst, after separation. As it stands it is meaningless.

It is submitted that the obvious failure of the framers of this bill to state in clear language, such as befits a piece of criminal legislation, exactly what it is that is condemned, is only another proof of what many have thought, namely, that the whole field of psychic phenomena is thus so far a mystery that not even those who pretend to understand it can be trusted to frame a single prohibition upon human conduct in that field which will stand the test of logical analysis or serve as a useful guide in human affairs. It is a subject upon which legislation ought not to be attempted, but which should be left to individual investigation and belief, each according to his lights.

This bill, as proposed legislation, places upon the Congress the burden of deciding questions which are not capable of decision, and upon the people, if it become law, of stifling beliefs and opinions which, if harmful, are harmful only to themselves.

Respectfully submitted,

GLENN WILLETT.
C. LARIMORE KEELEY.

MAY 20, 1926.

HON. CLARENCE J. MCLEOD,
CHAIRMAN SUBCOMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY,
COMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.

MY DEAR SIR: I hereby wish to change the conditions of the \$10,000 challenge, especially for to-day, if any medium present will read and properly answer five sealed questions that I will write; if they will put the sign of the cross on a slate or if they will make any inanimate object move three times in my presence; in fact, if they will do any physical manifestation which they claim they do by spirit agency—should I fail to detect, expose, and duplicate what they have done, they may immediately take possession of the \$10,000.

It is understood that should any apparatus be used I will have the opportunity of getting duplicates and any paraphernalia they use; I have the right to examine the party using it and the apparatus used.

The Congressmen present are to form a committee. They are to be the judges as to whether I have properly exposed the medium.

HOUDINI.