

PHYSICAL PROOFS
OF
ANOTHER LIFE,

GIVEN IN
Letters to the Seybert Commission;

BY
FRANCIS J. LIPPITT.

And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought; But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God. *Acts V:—38, 39.*

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Celui qui, en dehors des mathématiques pures, prononce le mot IMPOSSIBLE, manque de prudence. *Arago: Annuaire 1853.*

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LETTER I.

YOUR REPORT REVIEWED.

It is a *crime* to laugh and jest about thievery, and to impute it idly to others as if it were a light matter.—*Echegaray in the new play of "Galeotto."*

GENTLEMEN OF THE SEYBERT COMMISSION:

Your report of the séance of Pierre L. O. A. Keeler ("Preliminary Report," pp. 22 to 24 and 82 to 87) shows on its face an entire willingness, not to say a predetermination on your part to convict him of fraud without the slightest regard to the facts observed.

The trust you accepted was "to make a thorough and impartial investigation of all systems of morals, religion, and philosophy which assume to represent the truth, and particularly of 'Modern Spiritualism.'"

The acceptance of this trust imposed upon you a three-fold duty—a duty to the creator of the trust; a duty to the medium, upon whose honesty you were to publicly pronounce judgment; and last, but not least, to the sacred cause of truth. Thousands, here and abroad, were anxiously awaiting your decision as to whether the so-called "spirit manifestations" are mere jugglers' tricks, or whether they afford certain and tangible proof of another life after the death of the body. And, considering that until now the world has had no such proof, but only a *hope* founded on argumentative reasoning, it is impossible to conceive of a more solemn and important inquiry, or of one demanding a more entire freedom from prejudice, or a more candid and faithful report of the facts observed.

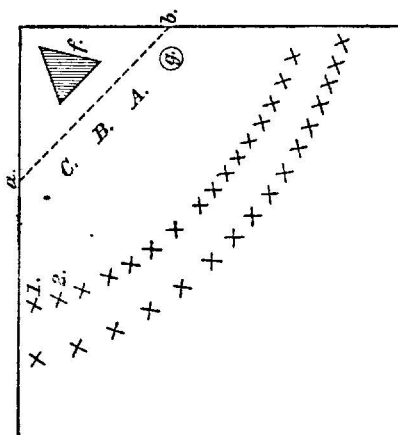
Your Report is far from satisfying these requirements.

At the very outset there is a circumstance inviting comment. Three of your ten members, Messrs. Leidy, Thompson, and Mitchell, were absent from the Keeler

séance (p. 82). Yet these gentlemen certify (p. 25) to the facts recorded in the minutes of *all* the séances, the Keeler one included, and express their concurrence in the conclusions based upon them. Now, how did they know but that, had they attended the Keeler séance, they would have disagreed with the other seven, both as to the facts witnessed and as to their conclusions from them? The question to be settled was whether the manifestations were genuine or were the result of trick. In other words, Mr. Keeler was personally on trial, and the verdict was to be either Guilty or Not Guilty of fraud; and the three absentees join in a verdict of Guilty (pp. 23, 25, 26) without having witnessed a single one of the facts on which it was founded. In a trial at law for an offence of the most trifling nature, on its appearing that a single member of the jury had been absent when any portion of the evidence was given, a verdict of Guilty would instantly be set aside. If three absent members of your Commission could properly base their decision on the statements and opinions of others who were present, there was no need of more than one or two attending the séances at all. Indeed, your report could have properly been made on what Professor Fullerton saw or thought alone.

Before examining your Report in detail it will be necessary to clearly set forth the conditions under which the manifestations occurred. For this purpose I copy verbatim from your Report the following description on pp. 83, 84, including the two diagrams appended. The diagrams are correct, *except* (as I shall submit hereafter) *as to the location of the table in the first one*. In this diagram, for greater distinctness, I have substituted for the letters (c) (d) (e) (showing the positions of the medium and of the two sitters on his right) the capital letters C, B, A; the letter A marking the position of the medium.

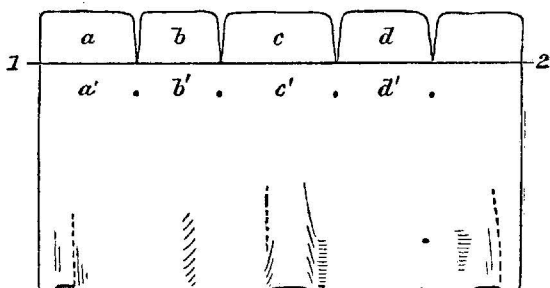
"The séance was held in Mr. Furness's drawing-room, and a space was curtained off by the medium in the north-east corner, thus:



"The curtain is represented by *a, b*; *c, d* and *e* are three chairs placed in front of the curtain by the medium, in one of which (*e*) he afterwards sat; *g* denotes the position of Mrs. Keeler; *f* is a small table placed within the curtain, and upon which were a tambourine, a guitar, two bells, a hammer, a metallic ring. The asterisks show the positions of the spectators, who sat in a double row; the two marked (1) and (2) indicate the positions taken by Mrs. Kase and Colonel Kase, according to the directions of the medium.

"The curtain, or rather curtains, were of black muslin, and arranged as follows: There was a plain black curtain, which was stretched across the corner, falling to the floor.

Its height, when in position, was 53 inches. It was made thus:



"The cord which held the curtain was 1, 2, and the flaps which are represented as standing above it (*a*, *b*, *c*, etc.) fell down over *a'*, *b'*, *c'*, etc., and could be made to cover the shoulders of one sitting with his back against the curtain. A black curtain was also pinned against the wall, in the space curtained off, partly covering it. Another curtain was added to the one pictured, as will be described later.

"The medium then asked Colonel Kase to say a few words as to the necessity of observing the conditions, need of harmony, etc. And then the medium himself spoke a few words of similar import. He then drew the curtain (shown on the preceding page) along the cord (1, 2,) and fastened it; placed three wooden chairs in front of the curtain as indicated in the cut, and saying he needed to form a battery; asked Miss Agnes Irwin to sit in chair (*d*), and Mr. Yost in chair (*c*), the medium himself sitting in chair (*e*). A black curtain was then passed by Mrs. Keeler over Mr. Keeler, Miss Irwin, and Mr. Yost, being fastened at *g*, between *e* and *d*, between *d* and *c*, and beyond *a*; thus entirely covering the three sitting in front of the stretched curtain up to their necks; and when the flaps before mentioned were pulled down over their shoulders, nothing could be seen but the head of each.

"Before this last curtain was fastened over them the medium placed both his hands upon the forearm and wrist of Miss Irwin, the sleeve being pulled up for the purpose, and Miss Irwin grasped with her right hand the left wrist of Mr. Yost; his right hand being in sight to the right of the curtain.

"After some piano music, the medium said he felt no power from this "battery," and asked Mrs. E. D. Gillespie to take Miss Irwin's place. Hands and curtain were arranged as before."

In your Report (pp. 23, 24, 86, 87) you make two distinct charges:

1. That Keeler surreptitiously freed his right hand from contact with Mrs. Gillespie's arm; and
2. That with his right arm thus freed he produced all the manifestations witnessed.

Both these charges are mere reckless assertions, as I shall proceed to show. And first, as to Keeler freeing his right hand.

Mrs. Gillespie was one of your own invited guests (p. 82), and you adduce her statements in support of your assertions (p. 87). She is therefore your own witness. She was seated at B (see diagram), on Keeler's right. You report (pp. 84, 85) that "Mrs. Gillespie said she felt taps, but declared that, to the best of her knowledge, she still felt the medium's two hands on her arm." And afterwards, when "the tambourine was played in the curtained space and thrown over the curtain, bells were rung," and "the guitar thrummed a little," you state that "upon being asked again [she] said she thought she still felt two hands upon her arm."

Upon this you attempt to discredit her testimony by suggesting that she may have been mistaken (p. 87).

But when the same Mrs. Gillespie makes another statement, that would seem to favor the other side of the question, it did not occur to you to suggest that in this also she may have been mistaken. Instead of this, you use it

as a fact proved, and you lay special stress upon it. I quote the entire passage:

It is especially worthy of note that Mrs. Gillespie declared that when the medium first laid hold of her arm with his right hand, before the curtain was put over them, it was with an under grip, and *she felt his right arm under her left*. But when the medium asked her if she felt both his hands upon her arm and she said yes, she could feel the grasp, but no arm under hers, though she moved her elbow around to find it. She felt a hand, but not an arm, and at no time during the séance did she find that arm.

Of this statement there is no reason to doubt the entire truth. A moment's reflection will show that the "under grip" at the commencement might cause the sitter at B to feel not only the hand, but also the wrist, and even a little of the medium's arm; and that if the position of his hands should be so changed as to become an *upper grip*, the sitter would no longer feel the medium's arm. Now, why Keeler should change the position of his hand during these séances, usually lasting two hours or more, is easily explained. One reason is that it is in order to rest the muscles of his arm. I venture to assert that not one of you gentlemen would consent to sit under the conditions described for any considerable length of time, if debarred the privilege of resting your arm held in a constrained position by slightly changing it, though without relaxing its hold.

There is still another reason for this change of position.

The theory of skeptics, and your own, is (pp. 23, 87) that, should the medium, after a firm grasp of the sitter's forearm for a certain time, release it by quietly removing his hand, the sitter might still continue to feel the pressure and thus suppose the hand to be still there, though the medium's arm is then free. Now, an honest medium would naturally desire to refute this theory in the only way possible; which is by repeatedly relaxing and renewing the pressure, and occasionally shifting a little the position of his hand, but without removing it entirely. I can speak of this from my own personal experience, having often sat by Keeler at his séances, occupying the position of Mrs. Gillespie in the séance.

Zeal in the detection of fraud is so praiseworthy that I have no fault to find with your perceiving indications of it, even in such insignificant matters as a change of position of the medium's knee (p. 84), and the sitting of the medium and Mr. Yost without their coats (p. 87).

On pages 86 and 87 you say:

The only thing worthy of consideration, as opposed to a natural explanation of the phenomena, was the grasp of the medium's hands on Mrs. Gillespie's arm.

The grasp was evidently a tight one above the wrist, for the arm was bruised for about four inches. There was no evidence of a similar pressure above that, as the marks on the arm extended in all about five or six inches only. The pressure was sufficient to destroy the sensibility of the forearm, and it is doubtful whether Mrs. Gillespie with her arm in such a condition could distinguish between the grasp of one hand, with a divided pressure (applied by the two last (*sic*) fingers and the thumb and index) and a double grip by the two hands.

And here again, to suit your purpose, you reject the testimony of your own witness. But apart from this, the merest tyro in anatomy will inform you that "to destroy the sensibility of the forearm," the pressure must be made at the elbow, and not at the wrist.

Your first charge, then, of a surreptitious withdrawal of the medium's right hand, so far from being supported by the evidence, is flatly contradicted by it. The charge is therefore a mere reckless assertion.

This brings us to your second charge, that the manifestations were all within the reach of Keeler's right arm. You say (p. 86):

It is interesting to note the space within which all the manifestations occurred. They were, without exception, where they would have been had they been produced by the medium's right arm.

This assertion is grossly untrue, as I shall proceed to show.

For the sake of clearness, I shall call the curtain of black cambric stretched across the corner of the room the *screen*, and that covering the persons of the medium and the two sitters in front of it, the *curtain*.

There were manifestations in front of the screen, and manifestations in the triangular space behind it. Your

assertion is that these were *all* within reach of Keeler's right arm. And to make out your case of fraud you were compelled to say "all," because, if, in a single instance, this were not so, there would exist an awkward fact, the only sufficient explanation of which might turn out to be the "spirit" theory.

If all the manifestations witnessed were indeed within reach of Keeler's arm, the fact would undoubtedly be important; not, however, as proving that Keeler produced them, but as justifying an inference that he *might have* produced them; which is obviously a very different thing. And here are your statements on this point:

When the guitar was held up, and when the tambourine was made to whirl, both of these were to the right of the medium, chiefly behind Mrs. Gillespie; they were just where they might have been produced by the right arm of the medium, had it been free (p. 85).

Nothing happened to the left of the medium, nor very far over to the right. The sphere of activity was between the medium and Mr. Yost, and most of the phenomena occurred, as for example, the whirling of the tambourine, behind Mrs. Gillespie (p. 86).

The three chairs which were placed in front of it were side by side, and it would not have been difficult for the medium to reach across and touch Mr. Yost (p. 86).

It is self-evident that whether all the manifestations were or were not within reach of Keeler's arm depended upon two facts: 1, The length of his arm. 2, The distance from him to the most distant point where any manifestation occurred; and that until these two elements were accurately ascertained there were no certain data for decision. To offer a conclusion of this sort based on mere guess or opinion is an insult both to science and to common sense; and a committee honestly investigating would have been sure to make these facts certain by actual measurements, which they would have recorded in their report. But if, on the other hand, not truth, but support for a particular theory were what they were in quest of, and they had some doubt whether actual measurements would verify that theory, they would carefully avoid making them; and in their report would confine themselves to indefinite statements and mere assertions.

And this is precisely what you have done. Such vague statements as “Nothing happened to the left of the medium, *nor very far over to the right*” (p. 86); And “*most* of the phenomena occurred, as for example, the whirling of the tambourine, behind Mrs. Gillespie” (p. 86); and “when the guitar was held up, and the tambourine was made to whirl, both of these were to the right of the medium, *chiefly* behind Mrs. Gillespie,” (p. 85); all these are non-committal on their face. The expressions I have italicised may all be truthful statements, and yet entirely consistent with the supposition that some of the manifestations were not within reach of the medium’s arm.

Nevertheless, I do find one point where a manifestation occurred distinctly located, and which calls for special comment. On page 84 you state that “Mrs. Gillespie declared she felt a touch, and soon afterwards so did Mr. Yost.” In the touch felt by Mrs. Gillespie there could be nothing decisive, since she was seated at B, at the medium’s side. *But not so as to Mr. Yost*, who was at C; because whether one seated at that point was or was not within reach of Keeler’s arm could not be settled by mere guess, but only in one or two ways: By measuring the length of Keeler’s arm, and also Mr. Yost’s distance from him: Or else by requiring Keeler to extend his arm horizontally to its full length without moving his body, and then noting the exact location of his hand. Neither of these courses was adopted by your Commission, who preferred to take for granted the correctness of their opinion without using the most obvious means of verifying it. Your Report says (p. 86): “The three chairs which were placed in front of it [the screen] were side by side, and it would not have been difficult for the medium to reach across and touch Mr. Yost.”

A mere assertion without proof. “Mr. Yost felt a touch.” But where? And what sort of a touch?

During the last ten or eleven years that Mr. Keeler has been holding these séances in our principal cities and in various parts of the country they have been attended and talked about by thousands of persons of all classes and conditions. And it is a notorious fact, of which it is hardly

supposable all of you to have been ignorant, that at all these séances the person seated at C (Mr. Yost's position) has declared that he felt pappings and pressures (and occasionally pinchings), of human hands; sometimes on his head and neck, and sometimes on both his shoulders at once. Certainly you were not bound to accept these statements as facts; but, under the circumstances, the public had a right to know from you the kind of "touch" felt by Mr. Yost; whether it was one that might have been made by the end of a stick, or by the tip end of a finger, or was that of a human hand, or of two human hands. And further, they were entitled to know whether the "touch" was felt only on the left shoulder, the one nearest the medium, or on the right shoulder, the one furthest from him, because this point had a decisive bearing on the question whether the "touch" could possibly have been made by the medium himself.

Let three persons sit in three ordinary chairs side by side, and it will be seen at once that the sitter on the left of the line (at A), unless gifted with a right arm of a most abnormal length, cannot possibly touch the *right* shoulder of the sitter on the right (at C) without such a decided leaning over to the right as would be plainly visible to all.

If you had perceived such a leaning over of the medium, it goes without saying that you would have mentioned it. Therefore (I repeat it) was the "touch" felt by Mr. Yost on his right shoulder? And what sort of a touch was it?

You assert (p. 84) that the medium's body was "distinctly inclined" toward Mr. Yost at the time. Here is another of your vague statements that may mean everything or nothing at all. It cannot refer to such a leaning over as to enable the medium to touch Mr. Yost's right shoulder; for in that case, as I have just observed, you would have mentioned it. Obviously, if both the medium's hands were grasping the arm of the sitter at B, this would naturally cause a slight *facing* of his body to that side; but this would have been no leaning over in that direction. Unless you preferred to leave this matter in the dark, why did it not occur to you to settle the ques-

tion on the spot, by first learning from Mr. Yost the locality of the "touch"; and afterwards, before the three seats were vacated, inviting the medium to stretch out his arm to its full length? You would then have had other proof than a mere guess as to whether the manifestation was within the medium's reach or not.

In regard to the manifestations in front, I shall cite one more instance of reckless assertion.

I copy from page 85 of your Report:

The guitar was then thrust out, at least the end of it was, at the bottom of the curtain, between Mrs. Gillespie and the medium. Mrs. Keeler drew away the curtain from over the toes of the medium's boots, to show where his feet were; the guitar was thrummed a little. Had the medium's right arm been free, the thrumming could have been done quite easily with one hand (p. 85).

Bear in mind that the guitar, while being thrummed, was on the floor, and that the medium and the two sitters were kept in an erect position by a curtain fastened round their necks, so that "nothing could be seen but the head of each" (p. 84). Now, in such a position (as any one can verify for himself) the ends of the sitter's fingers, unless he be a gorilla, will reach only to his knees; and he cannot possibly thrum a guitar on the floor without bringing the upper part of his body forward at an angle of about 45 degrees. Apart from the impossibility of the medium's thus stooping over without breaking the fastening under his chin or being choked by it, it is most certain that, had there been the slightest stooping over of the medium while the guitar was being thrummed on the floor, you would have mentioned it in your Report, and have made the most of it.

Next, as to the manifestations in the corner behind the screen, described on pages 85, 86 of your Report.

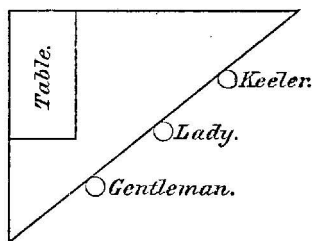
On the little table behind the screen were a tambourine, a guitar, bells, &c. (p. 83). These manifestations were as follows: Playing of the tambourine, which was afterwards thrown over the curtain; ringing of the bells; thrumming of the guitar; thrusting of the guitar under the screen between Mrs. Gillespie and the medium; elevation of the

guitar above the screen; whirling of the tambourine on a stick; drumming to piano music by two clothes-pins, afterwards thrown over the screen; notes written on paper that had been passed over the screen, which were then thrown over it; appearance of an arm thrust through the sleeve of a coat that had been passed over the screen; thrusting of a hand from under the flap, and writing by it on a tablet held by Mr. Furness, who was then allowed to grasp it.

Let me observe in passing: Your remark that the hand that appeared was always a *right* hand has no bearing on the issue, for the hand producing these manifestations would naturally be a *right* hand, whether belonging to a physical or to a spiritual body (for the existence of which we have the authority of St. Paul).

Your assertion is that all these manifestations may have been produced by Keeler's right hand, once freed from contact with Mrs. Gillespie's arm. As the tambourine and other objects were lying on the little table, on which also the notes were written (p. 85), it is important to know just where the table was; for, if it was beyond the reach of Keeler's hand, the objects mentioned could not have been manipulated by him, nor could the writings have been made by him. Inasmuch as in all the séances of Keeler's I have been attending for the last seven years the location of the table has been close up in the corner or else but a few inches from it, I did not understand, on examining your diagram, why its position had been changed at the séance in question. I accordingly wrote to Col. S. P. Kase (one of the three Spiritualists admitted to your séance; the others being your Committee and their fourteen friends), referring him to your diagram and merely asking him to state as to its correctness in regard to the position of the table. I received from him the following answer:

I CERTIFY AS FOLLOWS:—1. That the following diagram shows the real position of the table at the séance held by Mr. Keeler at Mr. Furness's own house on the 27th of May, 1885; being the same séance described in Seybert Commission Report, pages 82 to 87.



2. That at this séance the distance from Keeler to the edge of the table was certainly 2 feet 6 inches.

3. That [during] this séance Mr. Furness held an upright staff, sitting by it [the curtain], neither [did] Keeler move during the ringing of the bells and playing on tambourine back of this curtain.

4. At this séance ten or twelve pieces of paper on which messages had been written, evidently on the table, were thrown over the curtain to various persons comprising the Committee.

5. That after the séance I requested that these messages should be read, but that the Committee declined to read them, saying they would publish them in their coming Report.

6. I could not see that Keeler moved during the time these physical manifestations were taking place, and our friend Furness made no report of any movement of Keeler during the manifestations.

Philadelphia, February 11, 1888.

S. P. KASE,
1601 North 15th Street.

The hypotenuse of the triangle in your diagram is 85 inches, (Rep. p. 83.) This would give about 60 inches for the length of each of the two sides, (which I have verified by actual measurement). On these data, supposing Col. Kase's diagram to indicate the real place of the table, a simple trigonometrical calculation will show his statement as to its distance from Keeler to be correct; and its correctness I have verified by actual measurement.

Personally, I am confident that the misplacement of the table in your diagram (if there be one) was owing to some

oversight or mistake. But in order to support your theory that all the manifestations in the corner were within reach of the medium's arm, it was so important that the table should be near the curtain, you will not think it strange that uncharitably disposed persons should believe not only that there is a mistake in your diagram, but that the mistake was intentional.

And here, inasmuch as you did not choose to measure the length of Keeler's arm, I think I am justified in stating it. I can certify that the following measurements are accurate, having repeatedly made them myself :

Length of right arm from arm-pit to elbow, 10 inches.

From arm-pit to wrist, 20 inches.

From wrist to tip of middle finger, 7 inches.

Total length of arm to tip of middle finger, 27 inches.

To handle the instruments and to make the writings on the table the whole hand would obviously be necessary. Therefore, when the edge of the table is at a greater distance from Keeler than 20 inches, the manifestations behind the screen cannot be produced by Keeler's arm. Now, unless Col. Kase's statement is incorrect, and moreover, the position of the table at your séance was entirely different from its customary one, its distance from Keeler was *thirty* inches.

To make your Report of the slightest scientific value (for science ignores mere guesses), you should have yourselves taken and reported these measurements, though you could have arrived at the same result by causing the medium to stretch out his right arm without moving his body. Either one of these things was the obvious and proper thing to do. Why did you not do it? Were you afraid that too much accuracy in details might spoil your theory?

But the screen in front of which the medium was sitting extended all the way down to the floor (p. 83). How, then, there being no aperture in it, could he pass his arm behind him to reach the table?

You answer this by *assuming* that the medium raises the screen from the floor and then passes his hand under it

to produce the manifestations in the corner. This is your statement :

To have produced the phenomena by using his right hand, the medium would have to have passed it under the curtain at his back. This curtain was not quite hidden from the front one at the end near the medium, and this end both Mr. Sellers and Dr. Pepper saw rise at the beginning of the séance (p. 86).

It is most unlikely (assuming your supposition of trick to be correct) that the trickster would be so careless in full view of twenty-one pairs of Argus eyes watching his every movement, as to permit his raising of the screen to be seen. But supposing the gentlemen not to be mistaken as to what they saw, the fact is immaterial. The first person to sit at B was Miss Irwin; and after a certain time, no manifestations having occurred, Miss Irwin was released and the curtain was removed, leaving the screen in full view. Mrs. Gillespie then took Miss Irwin's place, and the curtain was replaced (p. 84). Now it was not till after this that any manifestations occurred. Had the screen been seen raised after the change had taken place (which is not pretended), the fact might have had some significance; but seen only "at the beginning of the séance," when no manifestations followed, it has none; the alleged raising of the screen having no connection with the manifestations whatever,

As to the drumming (not surpassed, though you do not mention it, by that of the most skilled expert in the art), I quote your account of it on page 85:

Two clothes-pins were then passed over the curtain, and they were used in drumming to piano music. They could easily be used in drumming by one hand alone, the fingers being thrust into them.

The pins were afterwards thrown out over the curtain. Mr. Sellers picked one up as soon as it fell and found it warm in the split, as though it had been worn. The drumming was probably upon the tambourine.

Your attempted explanation of the drumming is another instance of reckless assertion. No professional drummer can be made to believe that the long roll (invariably given at these séances) can be executed by one hand. But I need not dwell upon this; because no finger of any full

grown man's hand can be thrust through the split of an ordinary clothes-pin, and kept in it while being used as a drumstick; and more especially the fingers of Mr. Keeler's hand, which are unusually broad and thick, as shown by your own description on page 83. You could yourselves have verified this on the spot. In this instance, also, you chose to take for granted what would best tally with your theory, regardless of what the real fact might be.

I shall terminate this review of your Report of the Keeler séance by showing that it is open to the charge of a *deliberate suppression of evidence*.

The fact is notorious that these "Light Séances" of Mr. Keeler consist of two distinct parts: first, the physical manifestations already described; and secondly, after some characteristic writings by "George Christy," written messages to members of the circle, differing from each other as widely as possible in the handwriting, the turn of thought, and literary execution. And it is a fact equally notorious that the contents of these writings and their signatures are often such as to make converts to the extramundane theory of these phenomena of those whom the physical manifestations had failed to convince.

Here is your statement in regard to these written messages: I copy from page 85.

Paper was passed over the curtain into the cabinet and notes were soon thrown out. The notes could have been written upon the small table within the enclosure by the right hand of the medium, had it been free.

And this is all you have to say on the subject of the writings, that "notes were thrown out." Now there are certain particulars as to which the public had a right to be informed, as for instance, how many of these notes there were; to whom they were addressed; whether they were in different handwritings, or all in the same handwriting; by what names they were signed; what they contained; whether there was anything in the handwriting, the signature, or the contents of a *single one of them* indicating that it came from some person no longer in the flesh, or at

all events, that it could not have emanated from the medium.

Colonel Kase states (*see ante*) that ten or twelve of these written messages were thrown over the screen "to various persons composing the Committee"; and that, at the close of the séance, he requested that these messages should be read; but that the Committee declined to read them, saying "they would publish them in their coming Report." And in another letter I have from him he states that "the Committee were scanning the contents of these messages."

In excluding from your Report all particulars whatever relating to these writings you have been guilty of a deliberate suppression of material evidence; material, because had these particulars been given, they would have either tended to prove your assertion that the "notes" were written by the medium, or at least, *might* have been written by him—in either of which two cases you certainly would not have suppressed them—or else they would have tended to show that they had emanated, not from the medium, but from some extramundane source.

It is a well established principle of public law, recognized by all civilized nations, and based on universal experience, that whenever there has been a spoliation or a suppression of documents, it is to be assumed that, if produced, they would have been found to contain something the party did not desire to be known. The language of the maxim is "All things are to be presumed against the party guilty of the suppression." *Omnia praesumuntur in odium spoliatoris*. No words are needed to show the applicability of this maxim to the present case.

To sum up:

You report, substantially (pp. 25, 26, 27), that the manifestations at the Keeler séance were produced by fraud; and you base this conclusion on two propositions:

First. That Keeler "might have" surreptitiously got his right arm free.

But the evidence reported, so far from proving this proposition, goes to prove the exact contrary.

Secondly. That once the medium's right arm disengaged, every one of the manifestations "might have" been produced by himself.

This proposition, also, is flatly contradicted by the evidence.

Thus your charge of fraud is merely a reckless assertion, without a particle of evidence to sustain it.

For your condemnation on mere suspicion I have found, indeed, one precedent; but it occurred two hundred years ago. In the "Compendium of Ancient Blue Laws," published in the "Massachusetts Magazine" of February, 1791, I find this record:

Thomas Petit, for *suspicion* of slander, idleness and stubbornness, is censured to be severely whipped, and to be kept in hold.

There is an old story (I do not vouch for its authenticity), how that, about the year 1602, a new theory known as the "Copernican System" had been for some time talked about and even believed in by many persons, some of whom were distinguished for their ability and learning. How that, this theory being opposed to all the doctrines of the Church on the one hand and of Philosophy on the other, the most severe measures had been adopted to put the new heresy down. How that, with this view, it had been found necessary by the Church, two years before, to burn one of its supporters, named Bruno, at the stake. How that, about this time, a wealthy old physician who had been one of the deluded ones died, after making a gift of 60,000 scudi to the University of Padua to found a chair of Philosophy, on condition "that the incumbent of the chair should, either individually or in conjunction with a Commission of the University Faculty, make a thorough and impartial investigation of all systems of morals, religion and philosophy which assume to represent the truth and particularly the Copernican System;" and how that the University accepted the gift with its accompanying trust. How the philosophers scouted the idea of an investigation of such self-evident absurdities; among them one Faradeo, who laid it down as a maxim that "before

entering on any investigation of alleged facts, it is necessary first to decide what is possible and what is impossible." How that one Galileo had invented an instrument called a telescope, by looking through which he pretended to have found proofs of the truth of the Copernican theory, one of which was that the star Jupiter had four moons revolving round it. How that, in execution of the trust that accompanied the gift of 60,000 scudi, a commission of ten members ~~are~~ appointed by the University to wait ^{was} upon Galileo and request of him a view through his telescope of Jupiter's alleged moons; and how that Galileo acceded to their request. How that the Commission made and published their report, to the effect that they had, indeed, seen what appeared to be small stars in the neighborhood of Jupiter; but that these appearances *might have* been caused by specks of phosphorus secretly dropped on the object glass of the telescope by Galileo himself; and concluding, therefore, that the Copernican System was a mere delusion. And how that the whole matter resulted in great satisfaction to all parties concerned: to the University, which had secured the gift of 60,000 scudi; to the Church and to the philosophers, because a pestilent heresy both in theology and in philosophy had been extinguished; and finally, to the members of the Commission themselves, who, it was rumored, had been half afraid there might be some truth in the new discoveries, and were only too glad to escape so easily from mixing themselves up with a heresy so unpopular, and so dangerous to one's standing in the Church, and with the philosophers.

Respectfully yours,

FRANCIS J. LIPPITT.

LETTER II.

SHOWING WHAT FURTHER INVESTIGATION WOULD HAVE DEMONSTRATED.

Spiritualism is a question, in the first place, of evidence; it then follows to explain, so far as we can, such facts as have been established.—*W. E. Gladstone.*

The most trifling physical manifestations are of overwhelming importance, since they prove the existence of human beings in another state.—*Baron Hellenbach's "Geburt und Tod als Wechsel der Anschauungsform."*

GENTLEMEN OF THE SEYBERT COMMISSION:

The result of your investigation of the phenomena occurring through Keeler was merely your gratuitous assumption that all the manifestations witnessed *might have been* produced by the medium himself. But your duty did not end there. The question before your Commission was not how the so-called spirit phenomena may be, but how they *are* produced. The trust you accepted was to make a "thorough" as well as an impartial investigation of Modern Spiritualism. Your belief that the manifestations witnessed at that one séance of Keeler's might have been produced by the medium, even had it been well founded, did not satisfy this requirement, or dispense with all further investigation. Any equity lawyer will tell you that such an execution of such a trust annexed to a gift would be held to be what is technically termed "illusory"; entitling the heirs of the donor to recover it back. It is true, you call your Report a "preliminary" one; but let me observe that it is virtually a final one. For you cannot expect to obtain any more séances from mediums, public or private, who all now believe that however honest they may be, and however palpably genuine the manifestations occurring through them, no fair report of them can be expected at your hands.

But by what authority have you published a "preliminary" report? The pecuniary gift imposed upon you the

duty of a "thorough" investigation; and certainly no report could have been contemplated of an investigation just begun, and therefore imperfect, and so, unreliable and probably misleading. Your duty plainly was to follow it up to some positive result. Such a result you would have obtained even at the one séance of Keeler's that you report, had you chosen to adopt such mode of inquiry as common fairness and common sense dictated; and any one who shall read my foregoing letter to you and the statement I am about to present will be justified in asserting that one séance more with Keeler ought to have sufficed to settle definitively the question whether the phenomena occurring through him, at least, are of mundane or of extramundane origin.

In order to show what would have been, nay, what must have been the result of such further investigation, I now propose to give as brief an account as possible of some of the many manifestations I have myself witnessed at Keeler's "Light" séances during the last seven years; selecting from those only that cannot possibly be accounted for, so far as I can see, on the supposition of trick.

It would be in the highest degree presumptuous in me to suppose that my individual testimony as to facts of so extraordinary a character, taken by itself, should have any but the slightest possible weight with skeptics. Nevertheless, I have decided not to withhold it; remembering that it is only by a *consensus* of many individual testimonies similar to my own that such facts can be established at all.

Obviously, if the manifestations were produced by Keeler's right arm, it is the two persons seated at B and C that would have the best opportunity of discovering the fact. Sometimes he invites any two of the sitters present who may be so disposed to occupy those two seats; at other times, at the beginning of the séance, he himself selects these two persons from the sitters present; and it is while these two persons are seated by him that most of the physical manifestations occur. Now, it is a fact of some significance that, instead of choosing them from among the frequenters of his séances and known believers in the

genuineness of the manifestations, he almost invariably invites in preference strangers and skeptics to occupy these two seats. Is it likely that a trickster would do this? Moreover, he invariably requests the sitter at B to immediately notify the circle if at any time he should relax the grasp of either hand, or should perceive any agency on his part in causing the manifestations.

Now, all this certainly raises a presumption of some weight of honesty and good faith on Keeler's part; and it is only just that this presumption should be borne in mind in judging as to the genuineness of what follows.

Again, it is certainly a fact of some weight that in all these "light" séances I have attended of Keeler's (a hundred, I suppose, or more), there has not been a single instance where the sitter at B, whether believer or skeptic, has expressed the slightest doubt that during all the manifestations, *both* of Keeler's hands were distinctly and continuously felt on the sitter's arm. As for myself, I have often sat at these séances on Keeler's right at B, and I can positively state that I have never known him to remove either of his hands from my arm *but once*. As the experience was a curious one, I will relate it:

It was at the séance of March 22, 1886. When I had taken my seat Keeler grasped my arm at the elbow with his right hand and my wrist with his left, according to his invariable custom. The usual manifestations had been going on for some time, when suddenly Keeler withdrew his left hand from my wrist, enclaining: "My hands are cramped!" I said at once, in a loud voice: "It is due to the circle that I should state——" I was here interrupted by being violently shaken by a pair of strong hands on my shoulders. Twice I repeated these words, and each time I was prevented from finishing by being violently shaken again. On my fourth attempt to make my announcement, two large hands, visible to all, were thrust through the curtain and held over my mouth. On their being withdrawn I completed my announcement of the momentary withdrawal of the medium's hand, and instantly the hands patted me in the most friendly manner

on the back of my neck. I must not omit to state that during the few seconds that Keeler's hand was detached from my arm, no manifestation whatever occurred. The incident tested my own honesty and also indicated an approval of it, and was perhaps brought about by the invisible operator for that very purpose.

As to the supposed freeing of the medium's hand from the sitter's arm:

You will admit that this would be impossible if each of his hands were held by a person on either side of him. Now, at a séance of Keeler's in 1881 (I have lost or mislaid my memorandum showing the exact date), at my request, he took his seat at B, between myself and another sitter; I at C, on his right, and the other sitter at A, on his left; and during the whole time the usual manifestations were occurring, I was firmly grasping his right hand and the other sitter his left. And again, on January 18, 1888, Keeler sat in the same position, between Mr. Robert A. Whitehand at C, on his right, and myself at A, on his left. The following certificates show what then occurred:

I certify that in the evening of January 18, 1888, I attended a seance of Mr. P. L. O. A. Keeler at his lodgings, No. 416 Twelfth Street, n. w. in this city; that, during the seance, by direction of the controlling intelligence (supposed to be George Christy, of the "Christy's Minstrels") Mr. Keeler took a seat in front of a curtain drawn across a corner of the room between Mr. Robert A. Whitehand seated on his right, and myself, seated on his left, a black muslin sheet covering our persons, but leaving our heads exposed; that while I was firmly grasping Mr. Keeler's left arm with my right hand and his left wrist with my left hand, certain manifestations occurred, chiefly as follows:

1. A tambourine behind the curtain was shaken and thumped against each of us, keeping time with the piano.

2. A human hand repeatedly showed itself over the curtain, directly over Mr. Keeler's head and patting it.

3. A guitar was brought from behind the curtain, thrust between Mr. Keeler and myself, and placed and thrummed on in my lap, and afterwards withdrawn behind the curtain again.

4. Mr. Charles O. Pierson handed over the curtain to a hand which (he said) he saw and felt, two halves of a common clothes-pin that had been split in two. A drumming was then heard from behind the curtain which lasted several minutes, keeping perfect time with the piano.

5. I repeatedly felt a large hand, coming evidently from behind the curtain, pressing and pulling my right wrist and hand.

6. A slip of paper was handed over the curtain to Mr. Pierson, on which was written "Damn the Seybert Commission."

I certify most positively that during these manifestations I never relaxed my hold of Mr. Keeler's arm for a single instant.

FRANCIS J. LIPPITT.
1827 Jefferson Place.

Washington, January 19, 1888.

I have read the above statement of Gen. F. J. Lippitt, and testify to its truth in every particular; except as to his continuous grasp of the medium's arm, and his feeling of a hand touching his own under the covering; as to which, of course, I cannot testify of my own personal knowledge. But I can state positively that during every moment of the time the manifestations were occurring, Mr. Keeler's right hand was firmly grasped by my left.

R. A. WHITEHAND,
804 D st., n. w.

Washington, Jan. 19, 1888.

I certify that I was present at the seance mentioned in Gen. Lippitt's statement, which I have read and certify to be true in every particular, except as to the continuous grasp by the two sitters of Mr. Keeler's hands under the covering in front, and Gen. Lippitt's feeling of a hand touching his own; of which I cannot, of course, speak from my own personal knowledge. It is true, as stated, that I both saw and felt the hand that received from me the two halves of a clothes-pin.

CHAS. O. PIERSON,
Office Secy. of War.

Washington, Jan. 19, 1888.

*Dan
The Spirit
Comm*

Fac-simile of the writing referred to in the foregoing certificates.

I have not kept back G. C.'s profane expression of disapprobation, because the ethics of scientific inquiry imperatively forbid the suppression of any fact whatever connected with the subject of the inquiry. It is natural to suppose that great physical energy would be the chief characteristic of the agents employed by the spirit world in producing and conducting physical manifestations, and such energy is not always accompanied by a calm temper

or much refinement of language. But considering G. C. as engaged in the noble and unselfish work of convincing mankind that there is really no death, may we not hope that the recording angel has dropped a tear on the objectionable word?

The truth of the facts testified to in these certificates once admitted, it is demonstrated that the manifestations that then occurred were produced by some other agency than Keeler's arm. But as you may hesitate to give credence to the above testimony, I shall proceed to fortify this conclusion by selecting from my diary a number of other facts that I carefully noted down immediately after the respective sésances at which they occurred; and I shall submit that in not a single one of these cases was it physically possible for the manifestations to have been produced by Keeler's arm, supposing it to have been free.

Nothing is more common than his being suddenly divested of his coat while seated in front of the screen. The fact is known only by its being passed over the top of the screen by a human hand.

The sitter at B, often a stranger, and sometimes a skeptic, declares in every instance that the medium's double grasp had not been released for a single moment. Not the slightest movement of the medium had been visible to those seated with him or a few feet in front of him. The coat, on being examined, discloses no contrivance in its make to enable this to be done by trick; and on the curtain being removed the medium is seen to be coatless. Even should you suppose him to have got both his hands free, it is difficult to conceive how such a manœuvre could be executed without its being betrayed by the medium's movements, both to the sitter at B, and to the sitters in front.

But sometimes it is the medium's *vest* that is stripped from him and passed over the screen.

Séance of February 14, 1887. A hand appeared over the screen, beckoning to one of the sitters (Mr. Haddaway). On his approaching, it handed over to him Keeler's cloth vest, buttoned up to the top, with his watch chain dangling from one of its pockets. On the curtain being removed

Keeler was seen seated with his coat on, but without a vest. He had on both when he took his seat. The lady seated at B declared that he had not removed either of his hands from her arm for one moment; and no movement of the medium had been perceptible to those in front.

Séance of February 25, 1887, at which Mr. Alfred Russell Wallace was present. The manifestation just described was repeated under precisely the same conditions; as also afterwards at the séance of December 19, 1887; and again, at the séances of April 16, May 30, and June 11, 1888.

MANIFESTATIONS AT B.

The sitter at B feels not one hand only, but two hands patting both shoulders, head or back. To the best of my recollection this is almost invariable. I have often sat at B, and it has never failed to be my experience. I have already referred to a curious instance of this experience of two hands at B. I shall now cite another:

At the séance of June 17, 1887, the heat being oppressive, I had taken off my coat before seating myself at B. For some minutes I felt two hands tugging at my vest straps. Then suddenly there came a hand through the screen that unbuttoned my vest buttons under the curtain. Then came another tugging of the two hands at my vest straps. This ceased in a few moments, and I felt nothing more that was unusual during the rest of the séance. When it was over and the fastening of the curtain in front was undone, I stood up and was about to walk away, when I found to my surprise and the general amusement, that my chair had risen with me, my vest straps having been tied in a knot on one of its rounds.

At the séance of December 17, 1887, Mr. Jacob Mayer, a man of large and heavy frame, weighing, as he states, 240 pounds, while seated at B, suddenly found his chair withdrawn from under him, compelling him to stand up, while both Keeler's hands were grasping his arm.

His statement is as follows:

I certify that I was present at the "Light" or "Corner" seance held by P. L. O. A. Keeler, in this city, on the evening of January 18, 1888; that one of the writings then thrown over the curtain was the one which, at Gen. Lippitt's request, I have lent to him for publication, and beginning "Darling Jakob," and signed "Susannah;" that the name of my deceased wife was Susannah; that she died about eight years ago; and that I recognize the communication as being in her own handwriting, and in every respect characteristic of her. I further certify that I am positive that neither the medium nor any one connected with him had ever known her or heard of her, or could have known her name.

I further certify that, at Mr. Keeler's seance of December 19, 1887, while I was seated next to him in front of the curtain, a powerful force drew my chair from under me, compelling me to stand up; and this while I was distinctly feeling my left arm firmly grasped by both of Mr. Keeler's hands, and that my weight is 240 pounds.

THEODORE J. MAYER,
214 B st., s. e.

Washington, February 20, 1888.

MANIFESTATIONS AT C AND BEYOND.

We have seen that not one hand only, but two hands are manifested at B. Let us now pass to manifestations made at C and to the right of C. In order that we may know whether these are beyond the medium's reach, it must be borne in mind that, as shown by actual measurement (*see ante*), the length of Keeler's arm to his wrist is 20 inches, and the length of his hand from the wrist to the tip end of the middle finger is 7 inches. Now, when he stretches out his right arm at full length, the tip of his middle finger scarcely touches the left shoulder of the sitter at C, as I have more than once ascertained by experiment; so that to place his entire hand on even that left shoulder, the medium would have to lean over very perceptibly to his right. But, in point of fact, not one hand only, but two hands are usually felt by the sitter at C, and on both shoulders at once; and this has been my own invariable experience when I have occupied that seat.

The hand that appears the most often above the screen or thrust through under the flap in front is the large and muscular one of "George Christy." But scarcely a séance takes place in which other and very different hands are not seen. As for instance, at the séance of June 17, 1887.

I was seated at B, and Mr. Blackmar, another sitter, at C. A baby hand suddenly appeared directly over Mr. Blackmar's head. Afterwards a writing was handed over the screen signed "Mary Elizabeth." (Mr. Blackmar afterwards told me he had lost an infant daughter of that name, and that this fact was unknown to Keeler.) At the séance of April 11, 1888, a delicate female hand with long, tapering fingers appeared over the screen and wrote a communication on a tablet held for it by Mr. Darius Lyman; and at the séance of May 7, 1888, a small hand appeared over the screen and handed a writing to one of the sitters (Mr. Hall), and immediately after another writing was handed over to him by the unmistakable hand of "George Christy."

At one of the séances in the winter of 1886-7 (I omitted to record its date), one of the sitters, an entire stranger, a man of about fifty years of age, of a large and robust build, was indulging in jeering remarks, evidently believing the whole thing to be a fraud. He was more than once called to order by writings signed "G. C.," but in vain. When the two sitters were changed after the physical manifestations, he was permitted at his request to seat himself at C. Miscellaneous writings had now begun to be handed over the screen, but the man continued his offensive remarks. A writing from "G. C." was handed over, civilly requesting him to desist, for the reason that "others had rights there as well as himself." His rude behavior continuing, first came a note from G. C. suggesting that he should "either keep silence or leave;" then another, intimating that "he would be made to stop;" when, at last, he was suddenly thrown forward by a violent blow planted squarely on the back of his neck; and but for the fastening of the curtain round his throat he would have fallen to the floor on his face. This *argumentum ad hominem* was apparently appreciated by the culprit, for not a word more did he speak through the evening.

Small objects are often abstracted from the vest or coat pocket of the sitter at C without his knowledge; then re-appearing in another place. For instance, at the séance of June 17, 1887, I being seated at B, and Mr. Blackmar at

C, I suddenly felt a pair of spectacles on my nose. Mr. Blackmar recognized them as his own. The case had been taken from his vest pocket, and the spectacles taken out from it and placed on my nose, all unbeknown to him. I said: "I can spare the spectacles," when they were instantly whisked off by two visible hands thrust through the the screen. At the end of the séance Mr. Blackmar found his spectacles again in his pocket and enclosed in their case.

Occasionally there is proof of the presence of a human hand *beyond* C. As at the séance of March 21, 1887, when (the seat at C being occupied by Dr. Julihn) a hand covered by the curtain projected itself at some distance from Dr. Julihn to his right. On the curtain being removed I measured the distance from Keeler's shoulder to the point where the hand had showed itself, and found it to be 48 inches; that is, 21 inches beyond the tip of the medium's middle finger when his arm is stretched out its full length.

Sometimes the guitar (lying always at the beginning of the séance on the table in the corner) is thrust under the bottom of the screen to the *right* of the sitter at C, then placed in his lap and thrummed. One instance of this is thus stated by Mr. Haddaway:

I certify that at a "corner séance" held by Mr. P. L. O. A. Keeler, in this city, in the evening of Feb. 8, 1888, while I was seated close to the end of the curtain, on the medium's left, a large human hand was projected from behind the curtain; that it was a right hand, and that I both saw and felt it.

I further certify that on numerous occasions, in séances of like character, when I have been present and sat close to the curtain, the guitar has been partially projected from behind the curtain at the end, or corner, farthest removed from the medium.

J. D. HADDAWAY,
Washington, D. C. 507 12th St., N. W.

At the séance of February 27, 1888, I saw the handle of the guitar over the screen projecting obliquely from the C end of the curtain toward C; the sitter at C stating that the body of the guitar was resting on his right shoulder; it being thrummed on at the same time. And at the séance of February 24, 1888, I saw a hand directly over

the head of the sitter at C; the direction of the wrist showing that the body to which the hand belonged was standing on his right.

To fully appreciate the conclusiveness of these facts, it must be borne in mind that the medium was all the time sitting erect and motionless at A, and that, so sitting, with arm stretched out, he could not possibly have done more than touch the left shoulder of the sitter at C.

MANIFESTATIONS TO THE LEFT OF THE MEDIUM.

I shall now mention some manifestations to the *left* of Keeler (In your Report, page 86, you lay stress on the fact that "nothing happened to the left of the medium"); first premising that the distance from Keeler's left shoulder at A to the end of the screen on his left is 21 inches, as I have ascertained by measurement. This end of the screen I shall call the A end.

At a séance I attended in March, 1882, at a private house in Washington (Dr. McEwen's), I was called up to the curtain by George Christy. While I stood on Keeler's left close to the A end of the screen, my leg was suddenly seized by a large and strong hand which pulled me entirely behind the screen, where I was kept for several minutes. Whenever I made a movement as if to escape I was powerfully held back by the same hand.

At the séance of January 23, 1888, at my request G. C. allowed me to go and stand at Keeler's left, close to the A end of the screen. My leg was again grasped by a large and powerful hand with such force as, I am convinced, would have effectually resisted any effort I could have made to escape.

At the séance of February 8, 1888, I saw the hand emerge from the A end of the screen as described in Mr. Haddaway's certificate; and I witnessed the same manifestation again at the séance of February 13. And again at the séance of February 20, I saw a written message handed out to Mr. Haddaway from behind the same end of the screen; and Mr. Haddaway informed me that he

both saw and felt the hand that delivered it to him. And at the séance of February 24, 1888, I went up and shook a hand that appeared at that same end of the screen; as did also ex-Postmaster-General Horatio King and others who were present. At the séance of March 7, the same hand appeared; first, at the same place, and afterwards repeatedly thrust under the flap at some three inches from the end, followed by what Mr. Chapman (who sat close by) stated to be a *deformed* hand.

Finally, when the tambourine is whirled round on the end of a cane, it is in constant movement, always in a vertical position, between C and A, and sometimes beyond these points.

During all these manifestations Keeler remains quietly seated at A, erect and motionless.

HANDS AND ARMS SEEN THAT ARE NOT KEELER'S.

Another conclusive fact is that it is not only the large hand of "George Christy" that shows itself. Hands much smaller and more delicate, some of them evidently female hands, are sometimes seen. I have already mentioned one or two instances of this; to which I will now add that at the séance of December 8, 1886, I was called up to the curtain, when a small and delicate hand patted my own; George Christy's large and brawny hand appearing immediately afterwards. I shall presently relate instances of the appearance of three, and even of five human hands at once.

There is sometimes other direct proof that the arm that appears over the screen, or thrust through it, is not Keeler's. And let me say in passing that the arm appears sometimes in a shirt sleeve, and sometimes entirely bare up to the elbow, even when Keeler is seated with his coat on.

At the séance of February 14, 1887, I was called up to hold a tablet, while G. C.'s hand wrote upon it a few words. I was about to retire to my seat; but the hand grasped mine and pulled me forward with such force that I found myself looking over the screen. While my hand was being

held I saw *directly behind Keeler* the entire arm to which it belonged, bare to the shoulder. The arm was in a vertical position, as if its owner were lying there face upward; but there was *no body* visible; nothing but the arm itself. The arm was very long, large and brawny, as if belonging to a heavy built man of at least six feet. The screen was all the way down to the floor, and Keeler's arm was nowhere to be seen.

Again, at the séance of February 25, 1887, at which Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace was present, I had precisely the same experience; but the arm was not so large as at the former séance.

At the séance of April 2, 1886, I saw two arms at once thrust through from under the flap; one of them being entirely out of the medium's reach; about five feet, as I judged, to his right. They were both *right* hands, and were both writing on tablets at the same time in full view.

At the séance of February 17, 1887, I saw three hands thrust through under the flap at the same time, thus:

C . B . A .

The two outer ones were right hands, and wrote simultaneously on tablets held for them. I did not notice whether the interior one was a right or a left hand.

I shall add two other conclusive facts under this head.

First, when an arm is thrust through at any point under the flap, it is always at a right angle with the screen. And secondly, at the close of the séance of June 21, 1887, the medium and the two sitters retaining their seats on the curtain being removed, Keeler, at my request, stretched out his right arm its full length and then crooked his elbow, bringing his right forearm perpendicularly to the front. The crook of his elbow was seen to be over the left shoulder of the sitter at B. These two facts taken together demonstrate that, assuming Keeler's arm to be free, it would be physically impossible for him to write on a tablet in front of the screen, except at a point near the left shoulder of the sitter at B.

MANIFESTATIONS BEHIND THE SCREEN.

The manifestations I have been describing are those witnessed in front of the screen. Let us now pass to those that occur behind it.

The guitar, the tambourine, and the bells are placed on the small table in the corner, the dimensions of which are 26 inches by 15. At the séance of November 21, 1887, I placed the little table close up in the corner, and then measured the shortest distance from Keeler's right shoulder to the near edge of the table, and found it to be 30 inches; that is, 10 inches beyond the point where he could possibly use his hand in writing or in manipulating the instruments. Nevertheless, all the manifestations occurred as usual.

Those that occur behind the screen are, ringing of the bells, which are afterwards thrown over the screen; playing of the tambourine in time with piano music, after which it is thrown over the screen; thrumming of the guitar; drumming on the tambourine or the table with two clothes pins, but latterly with two halves of one split in two, which are afterwards thrown over; whirling of the tambourine on a cane; telegraphing (but only when some telegraphic operator is present) by raps on the table, and more recently by means of a key fixed in it; passing of paper writings through the screen; passing of other objects back and forth through the screen; the writing of messages on tablet slips, sometimes thrown over, but more often passed over to one of the sitters present who plainly sees the hand from which he receives it; and finally, the thrusting through the screen of a large hand, usually that of "George Christy," which writes with a pencil on a tablet held by one of the sitters.

It is a fact worthy of mention that I have never known an instance of any one of the circle being hit by one of the objects thrown over, even when they were hurled with great violence, and the room has been full of sitters to within a few feet of the curtain.

The guitar is seen elevated above the screen, its movements keeping time with the varying rhythmical changes of the piano music, threatening now Keeler, now the sitter at C, who is sometimes gently hit with it, while Keeler himself often receives blows from it, occasionally of great violence.

The drumming is so skillful as to show the drummer to be a professional expert. Although in your Report (p. 85) you profess to believe that Keeler could execute it with one hand, you will hardly venture to assert this to be possible without considerable practice. As to this, let me state a fact directly in point. The séance of October 30, 1881, was held at my instance for a private circle of friends. Up to this time there had been no drumming among the manifestations, all of which some skeptical friends of mine supposed to be producible by one hand. It occurred to me that no one would seriously assert that drumming, at least the drumming of the "long roll" was physically possible with one hand. I therefore bought a pair of drumsticks (in which *there was no split*; see Report, p. 85) and took them with me to the séance. Keeler at first objected to the experiment, fearing it would not succeed; but finally consented to it, and I placed the drumsticks on the table. The drumming was a perfect success, and, including the long roll, as well executed, to the best of my recollection, as it now is after some seven years of practice.

At the séance of December 12, 1887, were present at my invitation the leader of a celebrated band and one of its drummers. They are both skeptics as to spirit phenomena. At the close of the séance they expressed no opinion as to the genuineness of the manifestations; but they both admitted to me that the drumming was that of an expert, and was such that the execution of it, especially of the "close roll" by one hand was a physical impossibility. I am sorry to add that they both declined to sign a certificate to that effect, "not wishing to be mixed up in any controversy on the subject."

Telegraphing. At the séance of April 8, 1886, certain sounds were heard, made apparently on the little table. A

lady in the circle recognized them as a telegraphic call. Names and a message or two, recognized and understood by members of the circle, were then ticked out and interpreted to us by the lady. A gentleman who had brought her to the séance informed me after it was over that she was a telegraphic operator from Chicago and a stranger in the city, had never seen the medium before, and did not know what she was to witness until she had taken her seat in the circle.

At the séance of December 12, 1887, there was a telegraphic operator present who was then a stranger to me, but whom I now know as Mr. Charles O. Pierson, telegraphic operator of the War Department. Hearing telegraphic signals behind the screen, he responded to them by rapping on a round of his chair. Names unknown to the medium, and purporting to be of spirit friends, were ticked out and interpreted by the operator, all of which were recognized by some of those present. One of them was my pet name for my departed daughter, unknown most assuredly, to the medium, and so peculiar that the operator thought "there must be some mistake." I give below his statement of telegraphic experiences through Keeler:

WASHINGTON, D. C., *March 16, 1888.*

MY DEAR GENERAL:

In compliance with your verbal request I take great pleasure in relating my telegraphic experiences through the mediumship of Mr. Pierre L. O. A. Keeler.

On the 25th day of last November I attended, for the first time, one of Mr. Keeler's public séances. At this séance there was but one person (Mr. Henry Steinberg) present with whom I was at all acquainted, and to him I had never been introduced.

Nothing of a personal character occurred at this séance; and at its close I made an engagement with Mr. Keeler for a sitting for independent slate-writing on the following day, Saturday, November 26, 1887.

Promptly at 11 o'clock on the morning of the above date I entered Mr. Keeler's rooms, 416 Twelfth street, N. W. It is not necessary for me to enter into a detailed description of this private séance. It would take a ream of paper to do it justice. Suffice it to say that I was invited by the medium into a well-lighted room; that we seated ourselves at a wide table, on opposite sides; that two perfectly clean slates were placed before me for examination; that a small piece of slate pencil, about the size of two or three pin heads, was placed between the slates;

that I tied them securely together with a large handkerchief and laid them on the table; that I then wrote the usual number of messages to friends I wished to hear from, and then lay back in my chair awaiting developments, with my gaze fixed upon the two slates that were on my side of the table. The conditions were very bad—too negative—and it was with the utmost difficulty that we were able to do anything. Finally after a wait of nearly an hour we succeeded in getting two communications, and just as I was about to open the slates Mr. Keeler, in a very eager manner, grasped the slates again and exclaimed: "There's more; there's more!" Directly thereafter the pencil began to move, and intuitively I felt that they were writing a message in the Morse characters. I so informed Mr. Keeler, but he expressed a great doubt as to the truth of my surmises, mentioning, by way of argument, that telegraph characters and messages had to be ground out of a machine upon paper; and he showed at once by his conversation that he was not versed in the operations of my art. After a few remarks of the above tenor I asked the spirit if I was correct, and instantly the little piece of pencil clicked out in the Morse characters "Yes."

I then asked: "Is it some one I know?" And again came the telegraphic "Yes."

"Where did you work?" was my next query.

"Ya, ya, ya," came with the utmost distinctness.

"What did you sign?" I asked.

To which came the telegraphic character "S."

"On what line did you work?"

Clearly, slowly, and with the utmost distinctness came the letters "E-R-I-E."

"Is it Jack Samson?" I asked.

And if you could have heard the "Yes" that fairly jumped from between the slates, methinks you would have been in much the same condition of mind in which this experience threw me, utterly bewildered with the vastness of the field of thought that had been opened up to me.

After bidding him good-bye I opened the slates, and at the bottom of one of them I found the following message, written in the Morse telegraph characters:

```

    ". — — . — — | . — — . — — | .. — — .. | . — . — —
    . . — — | — — .. .. | — — .. — — . | — .. | .. . .
    .. | . — — . — — . .
    — . . . — . . — . —
    . . — .
    .. .. — "
  
```

Which, being interpreted, is "Well, well, old fellow, my 73 (compliments) to you.

G. B. (good bye).

JACK,

of 'Ya.'

This message, bear in mind, was written before I had the telegraphic conversation with him. He wrote the message and then proceeded to identify himself. Comment is unnecessary.

I will now cover the above by facts pertaining to my earlier telegraphic experience.

In the year 1872 I worked upon the telegraph lines of the Erie railroad at Paterson, N. J. The telegraphic call for the general offices of the "Erie," in New York city, corner Twenty-third street and Eighth avenue, known as the Grand Opera House was "YA." At that time there worked therein and thereon a gentleman by the name of Samson, who, I think, signed S." Memory fails me upon this point; neither does it signify, as he identified himself fully without this. "Jack," as we all called him, lived in Paterson, and he and I were very friendly in those days. I left the Erie the latter part of 1872, and met Jack but once after that year. That was in 1878, and then but for a few moments' conversation. He "passed over" some two or three years ago, I believe.

In this particular case the "mind-reader" theory will not work, as Samson was the last person in the world I would have thought of on that occasion. My mind was too busy with the thoughts of loved ones gone beyond to waste the precious opportunity.

After this experience I attended Mr. Keeler's public sances frequently, and whenever I did so the spirit purporting to be my friend Samson would come, and by placing a long lead pencil over the bridge of the guitar, tick out messages to the different members of the circle. (Seybert Commission will please "make a note on this," and if they will call any telegrapher—I care not who he may be—they will find from his testimony that this requires T-W-O- (2) hands.)

Upon one occasion this experiment was duplicated at the house of a friend of mine in this city (Mr. Armat Stoddart, 503 H street N. W.) where Mr. Keeler was invited to appear before a great many so-called skeptics and produce his wonderful physical manifestations, and amid surroundings unfamiliar he gave a most marvelous exhibition of his powers.

December 16th, 1887, I placed an ordinary telegraph key upon the little table which Mr. Keeler uses behind the curtain at his public sances, and during the evening my friend came, adjusted the key to his "fist," as the telegraphers term it, and used it to perfection.

Upon this occasion there was present by appointment an operator friend of mine by the name of James M. Dougherty, whose address is care of Appleton's Cyclopedia agency in this city; and one of the amusing features of the evening was the announcement made to Mr. Dougherty by my spirit friend that if he (Dougherty) would wait a moment he (Samson) would bring another "ham" (the term used in the telegraph business to cover a non-expert) to talk to us. After two or three minutes had elapsed the key began to work in a labored fashion, and with great difficulty was spelled out the message "I am here."

Upon being asked who he was, he replied: "Hinckle," or "Hinckley," I forget which. When asked where he worked, he replied: "In N. Y. (New York), on the G. and S. X (Gold and Stock Exchange)."

There was just as much difference to an experienced ear between the handling of the key by my friend Samson and Hinckle, or Hinckley, as there is between the chiromancy of individuals.

Another incident of this evening will bear recital. The day previous to the evening in question I met for the first time an old-time telegrapher by the name of Ashurst, formerly from New York city, who was employed as a clerk in the Navy Department. I mentioned this meeting to "Jack," and asked him if he knew him. He hesitated somewhat, and finally said: "Not personally. Wasn't he connected with the A. D. T. Co. (American District Telegraph Company) in N. Y. (New York)?" Not knowing this, I replied that I was unable to say. The next day Ashurst came into my office, and during our conversation I inquired whether he was ever connected with the A. D. T. in N. Y. His reply was: "No; but my brother was superintendent of that company in New York city."

I now come down to the evening of February 20, 1888, and the most remarkable experiences in connection with Mr. Keeler's public seance of that date.

On the above-mentioned occasion my friend Samson came as usual and announced telegraphically the presence of friends of the different members of the circle. Suddenly the key was grasped by another influence, and in a rapid manner was repeated the telegraphic call "U. S."

I asked if it was not intended for Sandusky, and the reply came "Yes."

"Who is it?" I asked.

"Heaton, Heaton," came the reply.

I did not, nor do I now, remember him, but the call "U. S." I recognized as the call for Upper Sandusky, Ohio, a station on the Pittsburg, Fort Wayne and Chicago R. R., on which line I worked years ago, and it is more than likely I was acquainted with the spirit, when in this body.

Once more there was a pause, and then very slowly was telegraphed the announcement of the presence of Sarah Bassler. Just as the last name was spelled out, a gentleman who was sitting immediately in front of me announced to the circle that his name had just been telegraphed, and thus for the first time did I know there was another person in the room who was acquainted with my art.

At this juncture I asked the spirit who was at the key, and the reply came: "H."

I asked if it was Heaton. "No," came the reply; "I am Horace Bassler."

At this point the gentleman before mentioned stated to the circle that the spirit was that of his son; that he was an operator when in earth life; that he worked in Tower City, Pa.; that he signed "H." when employed as an operator, and that he passed over from California in the year 1879. The gentleman then announced himself as a stranger in this city, and that his name was J. H. Bassler; residence, Myerstown, Pennsylvania.

Hoping that this may fill the measure of your expectations, knowing as you certainly do my inability to do justice to the matter in hand, and trusting that my feeble effort to make a truthful record of a series of experiences may carry conviction to some poor, furnished soul, I am, dear General,

Yours fraternally,

CHAS. O. PIERSON,
Telegraph Office, War Dept.

TO GEN. F. J. LIPPITT,
1827 Jefferson Place, City.

PASSING OF MATERIAL OBJECTS THROUGH THE SCREEN.

I come now to manifestations in apparently direct conflict with the axiom of physics, that "two bodies cannot occupy the same space at the same time;" this property of matter being known as Impenetrability, an essential attribute of it, without which its existence is inconceivable—I mean the passage of different objects through the screen of cambric cloth, shown on a thorough examination both before and after the séance, to be perfectly entire, having in it not the smallest aperture or rent.

I have rarely, if ever, attended a "light" séance of Keeler's where this kind of manifestation did not occur. The most common instance of it is what I have already adverted to, the thrusting of a hand or arm through the screen, the hand writing on a tablet held by some member of the circle. Among the objects I have seen passed through, are a bell, a watch, rings from the fingers of a lady seated at B, a sleeve button from a sitter at C, a palmetto fan, slips of paper containing written messages, and pocket handkerchiefs snatched from the pocket of sitters at B and C, or else from some member of the circle standing within reach of the mysterious arm.

That this passage really takes place is as certain as any fact can be. The object, a pocket handkerchief for instance, is sometimes seized by a hand coming up back of the screen, visibly carried over the top of it, and afterwards visibly emerging from under the flap in front. At other times the object is visibly drawn through under the flap in front, and afterwards handed over to some one from behind the screen.

Your explanation of this manifestation is a very simple one. You assert (p. 86,) that Keeler's hand opens a free passage to the rear of the screen by raising it from the floor.

This explanation is not admissible.

In the first place it assumes that the medium has got his arm free, unbeknown to the sitter at B. As I have before stated, during about seven years I have been attend-

ing Keeler's "light" séances, I have never known of an instance where the sitter at B has been able to detect the removal of the medium's hand from the arm. I now add that I have never heard of such a detection having been made at any time whatever. Now, considering that in the thousands of "light" séances Keeler has given, the sitter at B must have been, hundreds of times, a skeptic, and sometimes probably, a "fraud hunter," it is simply incredible that such removal should never once have been detected.

But secondly, the explanation is insufficient as not covering all the facts. The phenomenon in question is the passage of a material object through matter. Now the taking off of the medium's vest without removing his coat, five cases of which I have already mentioned, is certainly as stupendous an instance of this particular phenomenon as the passing of small objects through a cambric curtain; and of this the supposed raising of the screen furnishes not the shadow of an explanation.

But as to your theory of a raising of the screen, the facts are all against it. Keeler often invites members of the circle, and preferably, strangers and skeptics, to stand as close as possible to the screen, and instantly, on any manifestation taking place behind it, to look over and see what they can. If agreeably to your theory for the manifestations behind the screen it is necessary for Keeler to raise it, it is impossible to believe that he would invite or permit such looking over. Generally, the manifestation ceases the moment the spectator looks over, but sometimes the rappings or movements of objects do not cease, and if the screen were then raised it could not escape being observed. Yet never has the spectator, believer or skeptic, reported such a fact, so decisive of fraud. The only instance I remember of an arm or hand being seen on these occasions (except as before related), was at the séance of November 16. 1887, when a skeptical lady was permitted, at her request, to stand by the screen and look over while the writings were being done. She reported that she saw very distinctly near the table a female hand with long tapering

fingers, but attached to no arm, and saw nothing ~~close~~. else - The reading of your Report first called my attention to this matter of a supposed raising of the screen, and at the séance of January 23, 1888, "George Christy" enabled me to set the question at rest in the following manner:

All the usual manifestations had been taking place when I was called up as if to receive a writing from the hand thrust through the screen. I stood on Keeler's left, close to the A end of the screen. Suddenly my right leg was seized and pinched by a large and powerful hand behind it. Its grasp was so firm that I could not have extricated myself from it even had I wished to. I asked if I could step behind the screen. The answer being three raps, I did so, and remained there several minutes. The first thing I did was to examine the screen, which I found to be hanging all the way down to the floor. While standing there I repeatedly passed my hand over it, along the back of the medium and of the sitter at B. I asked for some manifestation to take place while I should be standing there, and instantly the table in the corner was shaken, then tilted against the wall, and then violently thrown down. During these manifestations there was no cause of them visible; and though my leg was repeatedly grasped by the same powerful hand, the screen, on which I constantly kept my eye, was never once raised from the floor even the fraction of an inch. The height of the screen from the floor was only 53 inches (Rep. p. 86), and the light from the gas burner, though somewhat dimmed, was amply sufficient to make every object behind the screen distinctly visible.

At the séance of April 23, 1888, I looked over the screen and saw the table and tambourine moving about; but no hand was visible, and the screen was all the while touching the floor.

You speak of the trembling motion of the hand that appeared above the screen (p. 85), preventing its being clearly observed. This quivering motion is sometimes so rapid as to render the fingers indistinguishable, leaving but a blurred impression on the eye. At the séance of March 19,

1888, Mr. Haddaway, who had received a writing from the hand, declared that it seemed nearly translucent, or "ethereal". How could a mortal hand be made to present such an appearance? Does it not rather suggest a rapid and continual integration and disintegration resulting from an unstable equilibrium of the mysterious chemical elements employed?

I will conclude this account of physical phenomena occurring through Keeler by a brief statement of what happened at some of the last séances I have attended.

At the séance of April 16, 1888, while the medium was sitting with his coat on, his vest was suddenly taken off and handed over the screen, buttoned up to the top. The sitter at B was positive that the medium's two hands were all the time grasping his arm; and when the curtain was drawn aside, the medium was seen with his coat on, but without a vest.

Twice afterwards during the séance his coat was instantly taken off him and handed over the screen.

A hand appeared over the sitter at C in such a position as to show that the arm to which it belonged was extended from a point near the C end of the screen.

While a hand appeared over B, the guitar was being thrummed on the lap of Mr. Hall, who was then sitting at the A end of the screen. The guitar was then pushed out and placed on the lap of a lady at the distance of four or five feet from the medium, where it was thrummed on.

Mr. Hall was caught by the leg and held at the A end of the screen, while a hand was thrust through the screen between B and C, and another one between A and B.

I was called up to the screen. While I stood there, three hands appeared over it at once; one between A and B, another between B and C, and the third near the C end of the screen. I made many attempts to seize one of them; but they kept rapidly disappearing and reappearing at unexpected points, evidently playing a merry game of hide and seek, so that my efforts were vain. One of them was apparently the hand of quite a young girl; it was small, the fingers were quite short, and on one of them

was a gold ring. (Knowing that a lady who often attends these séances had lost a granddaughter about fourteen years of age some three years before, I mentioned this fact to her at a subsequent séance and learned from her that her granddaughter's hands were rather short, with short fingers, and that she wore on one of them a gold ring, which was buried with her.)

Afterwards, standing at the A end of the screen, I felt my leg repeatedly pulled by the large hand I have already mentioned. I then went behind the screen, having obtained permission to do so by three raps. I stood there several minutes directly behind Keeler, continually watching the bottom of the screen, and passing my hand along the back of Keeler and of the sitter at B. While standing there I saw the table, the guitar, and the tambourine knocked about, and my leg was repeatedly pinched; but at no time was the screen raised a single inch from the floor.

At the séance of April 30, 1888, the medium's coat was taken off; notes, and then a pocket handkerchief were thrust through the screen; several members of the circle looked over the screen while raps were being made behind it, but saw nothing; and telegraphic communications were given, interpreted by a stranger present, who turned out to be a telegraphic operator. Moreover the guitar appeared and was thrummed on at some distance to the right of C, and afterwards to the left of Keeler near the A end of the screen, and then pushed upon the lap of a lady present seated at about three feet from him; and during all this a visible hand was patting the head of the sitter at B.

I took my seat at the A end of the screen. A large hand, in part visible, emerged from it, seized my hand and continued to hold it while another hand appeared patting the head of the sitter at B, and another one, thrust out between A and B, wrote on a tablet, and still another hand did the same between A and B.

Mrs. Levy was then called up to the screen. While she stood there, and while my own hand was still in the grasp of the large hand at the A end of the screen, three, and then four different hands showed themselves between A and C;

making in all five different hands visible at one and the same time. One of these was evidently a young girl's hand, which Mrs. Levy stated to correspond perfectly with the hand of the granddaughter she had lost.

At the séance of May 21, 1888, while I stood at the A end of the curtain, three hands appeared at once; one of them quite small and delicate. Then two hands, both *right* hands, were repeatedly thrust through the screen at once, and shaken by several of the sitters. Then three hands appeared again, one of them a *left* hand. While hands were appearing over the screen, patting the sitters at B and C, my pants were being pulled and held, and I received a slap on the back from another hand that emerged from the screen. A writing by G. C. on a paper I was holding said "Come over"; and I went behind the screen, where I stood for some time, looking sharply at every thing about me and passing my hand over Keeler's back. While I stood there, the table was tilted, raps were heard, and the guitar dragged over the floor up to my feet and thrummed on; but no visible agency was perceptible. At the same time (and this was the most extraordinary fact of all) hands thrust through the screen in front were seen writing messages on tablets, while no trace of an arm or hand were visible *behind* the screen. During the whole time, the screen remained undisturbed and touching the floor.

LETTER III.

DIRECT SPIRIT WRITINGS.

Plus de cinq cents personnes ont pu constater le phénomène étonnant de l'écriture directe des génies invisibles, fournissant elles-mêmes leur papier. (*Realité des Esprits, par le Baron L. De Guldenstubbe.*)

Plus negabit unus asinus in unâ horâ quàm centum philosophi probaverint in centum annis. (*Dr. Johnson to the Oxford Professor.*)

GENTLEMEN OF THE SEYBERT COMMISSION:

.At the Keeler séance you received and read various writings addressed to your members purporting to have been executed by spirit hands. As you have not vouchsafed to give one word of information about them, the public is left in the dark in regard to the very class of manifestations reported by you which, to the majority of persons, furnishes the most satisfactory evidence of spirit return.

I shall therefore devote this letter to a statement of facts of such a nature as to prove that the writings produced through the mediumship of Pierre L. O. A. Keeler really emanate from the spirit world. To those who may fail to be convinced by the evidence I am about to set forth, my only reply will be (unless, indeed, they deny *in toto* the truth of my statements) the second of the two mottoes that head this letter.

The writings at these "light" séances are of two kinds. Most of them purport to come from "George Christy," and are signed "G. C." Some of them are visibly executed by a hand thrust through the screen; others come from behind it. The handwriting in all of them is the same; very coarse, and so hurriedly written as to be sometimes illegible.

When paper for writing is called for, two or three paper tablets, with pencils, are passed over the screen to hands that receive them. And then for an hour or more there is a constant succession of writings thrown or handed over, and sometimes passed through the screen under the flap.

Some of them are signed "G. C.;" but the greater part bear the names of departed friends of members of the circle.

1. As to George Christy's writings that are visibly executed by the hand in front, some of them could not possibly be executed by Keeler, even were his arm free; because the forearm where the hand is writing is always seen at a right angle with the screen; so that when the writing is between B and C, as it often is, the crook of the writer's elbow must be where Keeler's elbow could not possibly be; experiment showing, as before stated, that his elbow crooks near the left shoulder of the sitter at B.

2. The writings behind the screen are occasionally executed on the shoulder or neck of the sitter at B or at C, as I can state from personal experience. Most of them, however, are apparently done on the table, which, as we have already seen, is beyond Keeler's reach. But even were it not, if you bear in mind that he is facing steadily to the front, and would be thus writing with his hand behind him; that the writing is often extremely delicate, and sometimes so fine as to be almost illegible without a microscope; that the lines are usually as regular as if they had been ruled; and finally, that both the handwriting and the literary style in these writings are nearly as various as the writings themselves; the absurdity of supposing them to be written by Keeler becomes apparent.

Again, were it possible that these writings behind the screen are done by Keeler, the handwriting of those written in front would necessarily be very much better than in those executed by his hand behind him. *Now the exact contrary is the fact.* As before stated, the handwriting in those executed in front, in what would be Keeler's natural position, are always coarse and sometimes illegible.

3. I give below a fac-simile of a note received from Keeler February 14, 1888, in order that his handwriting may be compared with that of the specimens I shall presently give of writings received from behind the screen.

4/3 6th St., N.W.,
Feb., 14th 1888.

Dear Genl. Dippitts:

We are obliged to postpone indefinitely, the seance proposed for this Tuesday - evening.

I will let you know in due season when it will be held.

Very Truly Yours-

Pierre L. A. Keeler

Fac-simile of a note received from P. L. O. A. Keeler.

4. The written messages are occasionally in German, and sometimes in French, or partly in French; and I remember a séance in which a message came in Italian, and which was translated by a lady present who knew the language.

If Keeler is ignorant of these languages those messages could not have been written by him. He assures me that he has no knowledge whatever of either of these languages beyond a few isolated words of French and of German that he has caught from having heard the messages read; and that of Italian he knows nothing whatever. I have not the slightest reason for doubting his statement, and I have known him for about seven years.

At the séance of May 7, 1888, a lady present received a communication in French from her father, who, she informs me, was of French descent. At my request she has kindly lent it to me for publication. A fac-simile of it will be found below. I asked the lady for a written statement in regard to it, and the following is her note in reply. For sufficient reasons she desires her name to be withheld; but I am authorized to give her name and address to any person who may wish to communicate with her, but not for publication.

WASHINGTON, D. C., June 4, 1888.

Gen'l Francis J. Lippitt,
1827 Jefferson Place, Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir: In reference to the "communication in French" which I received at one of Mr. Keeler's "light séances," I desire to say that it had my father's name signed to it, and the name spelled as his friends (save those who were acquainted with the *French* language, and *they* will quickly comprehend how *incorrectly* spelled) always spelled it. But the *test* to me lies in the fact that he calls me by my "pet" name! I am sure that Mr. Keeler did not *know* this, for my most *intimate* friends in this city had never *heard this name*.

My father was in Confederate service, was killed at the battle of Drury Bluff on the 16th of May, 1864, when I was but a "tot," and yet he comes to me after a silence of 24 years, and addresses me as he did in "lang syne."

Yours for the truth,

(Mrs.) _____.

Leina
Je sens même que
les dieux, que j'ai
toujours servis, vous
aiment et qu'ils veulent
que je vous aime aussi
comme si vous étiez mon
cher aimé. J. A. Poter

Fac-simile of a writing received at the séance of May 7, 1888.

On examining the above message it will be seen that, excepting the strange grammatical and orthographical errors in the last four words, it is written in perfectly good French. I can conceive of a satisfactory explanation of these errors, but shall not stop to state it, because they

are entirely immaterial to my present object, which is to show that the communication, nearly all of which is in correct French, could not have been written by Keeler.

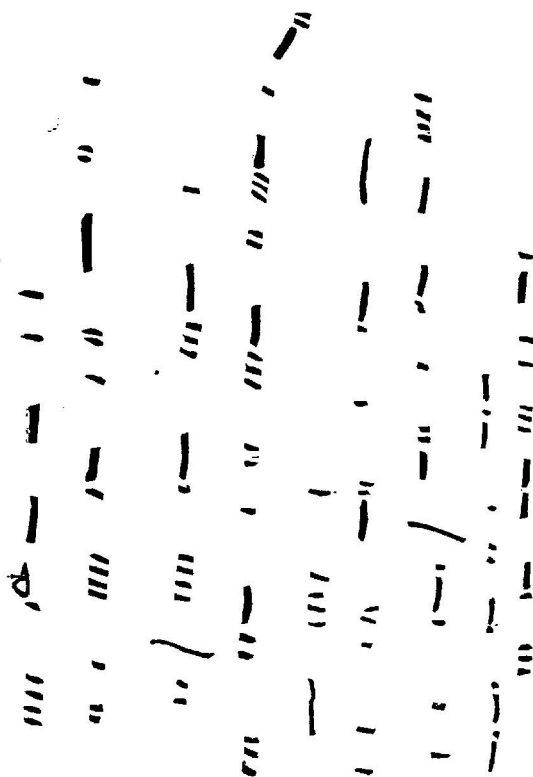
At the séance of November 16, 1887, a message in German was handed over the screen, and translated to the circle by Mr. Henry Steinberg, who assures me that he never knew Spies, and that he had not been thinking of him. Here is a fac-simile of it:

Meine Freunde
 Ich reche Sie
 unter meine Freunde
 Ich habe viel zu
 sagen
 August Spies

Fac-simile of a writing received at the séance of Nov. 16, 1887, five days after the execution of August Spies at Chicago.

5. At a séance in November or early in December, 1887 (I neglected to record in my notes what I am about to relate), a communication in telegraphic characters - was handed over from behind the screen, which no one present could read except Mr. Charles O. Pierson, the telegraphic

operator, whose name I have already mentioned. Here is a fac-simile of it:



Fac-simile of a writing received at a séance in November or December, 1887.

Endorsed on the writing is the following:

WASH'N, D. C., *May* 25, '88.

I certify that this message was passed over the curtain at Mr. Keeler's light séance to me. Date not remembered.

CHAS. O. PIERSON.

Mr. Pierson has furnished me with the following interpretation of it:

"Hello, Charlie; I have survived the ordeal of death. Jack Samson."

As Keeler has no knowledge of telegraphic characters, the above message could not have been written by him.

6. The messages often constitute by themselves conclusive proof that they do not emanate from Keeler. I have scarcely ever attended a "light" séance of his in which the signatures, or the contents, or both, of some of them were not recognized by parties present who were absolutely certain that Keeler could have had no knowledge of them. You will therefore not think it strange that some of the hundreds who know this fact should attribute your deliberate and unexplained suppression of those "notes" you received at the Keeler séance, to a fear that they might refute your theory of fraud.

Of such recognitions I will now give some instances.

At the séance of December 27, 1886, one of the messages was signed "Francis Leonard Lippitt. This was the name of my infant son who died in Brussels, Belgium, in 1854. It referred to something known to no mortal but myself and a friend in California.

The following is a fac-simile of a writing received by me at the séance of May 26, 1888. The handwriting in the *body* of it is strikingly like that of the person whose name is signed to it, and who died in 1859.

How happy this coming
 makes us. And yet if you were
 totally blinded to all these revelations
 our coming, as fair and meet
 with no recognition would cause
 as more pain than pleasure. I
 have much to tell you more time.
 Elizabeth Lippitt.

Fac-simile of writing received May 26, 1888.

At the séance of March 19, 1886, a message came to me signed "Lucy Ann Lippitt," the name of an aunt who died in Providence, R. I., in 1866, and of whom I am positive Keeler had never heard.

At the same séance a gentleman sat by me, evidently a stranger, and, as I judged from a question he asked me, a doubter, if not a disbeliever. A writing came to him signed by the full name of an uncle, afterwards one in a female hand signed by a very unusual Christian name which was that of his mother, and the handwriting of which, he told me, he recognized as her own; and finally one signed by a most peculiar Christian name, which he told me, was the pet name of a brother who had died in 1858, aged three years. He assured me that neither the medium nor any one present had ever heard these names.

At the séance of March 22, 1886, a writing came to me signed "Nellie Morris," a friend of my departed daughter in the spirit world, of whose existence and identity I had before obtained conclusive proof, but of whom, I am positive, Keeler had never heard.

At the same séance I received a message addressed to her father from a young lady friend who had departed this life about two months before. Its language was beautiful and touching, and it was signed by her name in full. The *signature* was strikingly like her own, including a peculiar spelling of her first name, and a peculiar formation of its first letter.

At the séance of January 13, 1888, one of the writings thrown over was identified by Mr. Theodore J. Mayer, then present, as coming from his spirit wife. (See his certificate *ante*.) Below is a fac-simile of it:

Darling Jakob,
 "Absent, but not forgotten"
 used to be the old saying, but now
 it is neither absent nor forgotten,
 for I am present, and our sweet
 recollections of each other cannot
 perish. I shall be with you at
 the other circle and try to
 talk to you, and touch you
 that you may again dear husband
 receive a touch of the vanished hand
 and a sound of the voice that is still.
 Susannah.

Fac-simile of message received Jan. 13, 1888.

At the séance of March 25, 1886, I received a writing signed by the name of an uncle of mine, an Episcopal clergyman, who died in Virginia in 1867. I have no reason to believe that Keeler had ever heard of him. Since then I have received from him at these séances some forty or more messages, all in the same handwriting, which, however, does not resemble his handwriting on

earth. I give below a fac-simile of the one received April 2, 1886:

I promulgated what I believed to
be the truth but when I ascended to
the higher bp. of what I had so much
spoken, I found that while I had stated
fundamental truths, the roots was
rooted in the core. I saw see
differently and must all other to
look through the clear glass, and
discard the unmarked one. I was
known as the Rev. Edward R. Lippett

Fac-simile of a writing received April 2, 1886.

At the séance of April 12, 1886, the following message came to me:

"Tell Elizabeth to look into this blessed truth. It will comfort me. Sarah Lander."

Miss Elizabeth Lander is a connection of my present wife through her first husband; and at the time this writing was received was on a visit in Washington. Her sister, Sarah Lander, died in Salem, Massachusetts, many years ago. I never saw her, and Keeler could not possibly have heard of her.

At the séance of January 19, 1887, Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace was present. A writing came to him signed "William Martin," which seemed to him "a most remarkable proof of identity." I extract his account of it from his well-known lecture, "If a man die, shall he live again?"

The other day when I was in Washington attending some séances there where people receive messages on paper, I received to my great astonishment a message to this effect: "I am William Martin; I write for my old friend William Wallace to tell you that he will, on another occasion, when he can, communicate with you." I am perfectly certain that only one other person in America knew my brother's name, or knew of the relation between my brother and Martin, and that was my brother here in California. I am perfectly certain that no person in the East could possibly have known either one name or the other. Therefore it seems to me this was a most remarkable proof of identity.

At the séance of February 14, 1887, a writing came from a father, addressing his daughter by her Christian name, referring to a private matter, and signed by his name in full. The young lady was not present, but as I was acquainted with her I took charge of it and afterwards delivered it to her. I had not known her Christian name, but found that it had been correctly given in the writing. She informed me that Keeler had no knowledge of either of the names, or of what was referred to in the writing.

At the séance of June 4, 1887, a writing of which below is a fac-simile, came to me signed "Robert Dale Owen."

Sam Lippitt
 What a ~~not~~ ~~truth~~
 and what a blind
 conducted for myself
 with me.
 Robert Dale Owen

Fac-simile of writing from Robert Dale Owen received June 4, 1887.

In December, 1874, Mr. Owen was subjected to certain influences in Philadelphia that induced him to withdraw his confidence from the "Katie King" who had been appearing materialized through Mr. Holmes. During that *imbroglio* I had several interviews with him in which I maintained, what I had obtained decisive proofs of, that this "Katie King" was a genuine spirit, and not that notorious Eliza White who had been bribed to sign the lying "Confession of Katie King." This is evidently what the writing refers to. The affair had occurred seventeen years before, when Keeler was a boy. He assures me that, though he had heard vaguely of the Katie King affair, he did not remember either my name or that of any other person as being connected with it, and I have no reason to disbelieve him.

At the séance of March 23, 1887 (at which Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace was present), a writing was thrown over, signed "Nellie Stearns." On its being read aloud no one at first responded. At last a lady in the circle, evidently

a stranger, rose and said that she had lost a niece of that name, and asked if the controlling spirit could state what she was then doing: In a few seconds this answer was thrown over and read: "Perhaps she is climbing the Golden Stair." The lady appeared quite startled at this, and then stated that Nellie's last words were "Mother, kneel down and pray that I may climb the Golden Stair." In response to my questions after the séance she said she was an entire stranger to Mr. Keeler; and that neither he nor any person present knew her niece's name, or could have heard of the circumstance.

At the séance of February 1, 1888, one of the sitters was a stranger from Pennsylvania. A message came to him signed "Phebe Green." He informed us that Phebe Green was his mother's first cousin, who had died two years before in an interior town (which he named) in Pennsylvania, and that the medium could never have heard of her.

At the séance of March 7, 1888, a lady was present who, as she informed me, had never before seen the medium or attended any spiritual séance. Nevertheless, to her extreme surprise, two messages came to her; one of them signed by the full name of a sister, and the other by the full name of a friend.

At the séance of April 11, 1888, a gentleman present received a message signed by the name of his late wife. He stated that she had died but eighteen days before, and that, before dying, she had promised to manifest herself to him, should such a thing be possible, at the first opportunity that presented itself; and that the medium was a stranger to him, and, he felt certain, had never heard of his wife.

I have received the following statement from a lady of high social position, but whose name I am not at present authorized to disclose. I was present at the séance she mentions. The lady was then a stranger to me. I had never seen her before, and did not know her name. It was I that held the tablet with her while the writing was being done. It was executed with lightning rapidity, the hand

numbering each sheet on beginning it, and tearing it off and delivering it to me as it was finished. When the whole was completed, I handed the sheets to her, and she read them aloud to us. The narrative was very interesting, giving the particulars of his death on the battle field, and of what he saw on awaking in the other life. It was evidently written by a man of culture, and *not* by George Christy. In order that the statement may be clearly understood I will add that the officer whose name was signed to the communication was also a General in the U. S. Army, as well as the General X. first alluded to.

In the summer of 1881, a friend of mine, General X—, an officer of the army, passed into the spirit land. He was a man of more than ordinary intelligence, who had investigated carefully and thoroughly the subject of spiritualism, and one, who, I felt sure, would continue the investigation on the other side. Feeling a great desire to meet him again, I availed myself of an opportunity afforded me in the following winter to attend a seance at a private house, with Mr. Keeler as a medium. The conditions were those usually found in such circles. A black cambric curtain was suspended across a corner of the room, in front of which Mr. Keeler sat with any two persons of the circle who chose to assist him in forming a "battery."

In the course of the evening I was asked if I would like to sit with him, and I eagerly assented. I sat at his right, with both of his hands clasping my left arm, while my right hand held that of the person on my right; we three being the only ones in the circuit in front of the curtain and facing the audience. I was scarcely in position when I felt taps upon my back and shoulders. With my mind intent upon the friend of whom I have spoken, I said (mentally without moving my lips) "Is that you, General?" Immediately came many taps on my back and three audible knocks upon my chair. Again I said mentally, "General, if you are really here knock upon my right shoulder;" and immediately a hand was laid upon my shoulder, and a number of taps in rapid succession came not only on the right shoulder, but on the left also.

The seance ended just then, and I went away convinced that the spirit present was the friend of whom I was thinking at the time.

A few days, perhaps a week afterwards, I received through the mail a communication from a lady in New York, who is so far from being a professional medium that she does not acknowledge to many persons that she is a medium at all. Its purport was, though not, perhaps, its exact language, "I am a writing medium and am importuned by a spirit who desires to communicate with you, to ask you to go to another of Mr. Keeler's seances, where he will manifest himself by pulling the buttons of your dress." I am not certain whether, in this letter, the name of the spirit who desired to communicate with me was mentioned; but, in a day or two thereafter, I received another letter, also through the mail, from an acquaintance in this city (Washington), the wife of a navy officer, whose hand also was sometimes controlled in the same mysterious manner, enclosing a communication addressed to me, and signed by a very dear friend and relative who was a distinguished officer of the army, and was killed

in the battle of the Wilderness in 1864. The communication stated, as did the previous one, that he had a great desire to meet me; and that it was he, and not General X—who had manifested himself when I sat with Mr. Keeler; that he hoped I would give him another opportunity, and that I would know him from his pulling the buttons on my dress, etc.

In a few days I found an opportunity to meet Mr. Keeler again at a private house, where there was a small circle, probably not more than fifteen persons in all. I was disappointed that I was not asked to sit with Mr. Keeler, but studiously avoided betraying any anxiety. Very soon a hand, a large, muscular hand, appeared from behind and over the curtain, and beckoned to some one. Beginning at one end of the line, each one inquired, "Is it I?" When my turn came, the hand showed plainly (I do not recall how) that I was wanted.

I responded at once, and, as I approached the curtain, the hand reached out until it touched my face; and then slowly passed down until it reached the buttons on my dress and pulled them! I took the hand or rather the hand took mine. It was hard and strong, like that of a large man. Some one handed me a tablet and gave the hand a pencil, when it wrote at least ten pages as large or larger than the one on which I am now writing (about 7 inches by 4, F. J. L.); tearing each one from the tablet as it was written. I regret that I have not them by me now; but I remember very well that, after writing of his pleasure at having an opportunity to communicate with me, he gave an account of the manner of his death, mentioning the place and circumstances, and that it was signed by his full name.

I have been asked if the handwriting bore any resemblance to that of the same person in life. Taking into consideration the fact that it was written on a tablet held unsteadily by two persons, by a hand quite unsupported, one could scarcely expect that it would be a fac-simile of writing under different conditions; but upon examination, there are some strong characteristics which, even taken apart from the circumstances that led up to the interview, would, I think, have enabled me to recognize it as that of the person who signed it.

7. Even were the writings all prepared beforehand, the facts I have been stating suffice to show that they cannot have emanated from Keeler.

But, passing by the fact that the writing is perfectly audible to those sitting with the medium, and indeed, all over the room when everything is quiet, there are certain facts that demonstrate that the writings are *not* prepared beforehand.

First. As I have myself repeatedly tested, the tablet slips handed over the screen and then returned with the writings upon them, may always be identified by being first marked by any sitter that requests permission to do so.

Secondly. Sometimes the writings refer to some occurrence, or some special thing that the sitter has done a few

hours only before the séance, known only to the sitter himself, and of which Keeler could not possibly have been informed; as at the séances of February 8 and May 19, 1888; the details of which, being of a private nature, I will not here mention.

Thirdly. Occasionally, though not often, writings are handed over from spirit friends, sometimes to explain what was illegible, or to correct a mistake just made in the reading. But, during the whole of every séance, George Christy is constantly passing over writings of his own apropos of something that has just occurred or been said; thus carrying on an incessant conversation, as it were, with the circle, or with some member of it. One instance in illustration will suffice.

At the séance of June 4, 1887, a lady in the circle whispered to her companion that "the writings were all in the same handwriting." I was seated by Keeler's side at B, but did not myself hear the whisper. In a few seconds came over a writing from "G. C.:" saying "They are *not* in the same handwriting" (which was true). The lady expressed her surprise at her whisper having been overheard, and the next instant came over another writing from "G. C.," as follows; "We see your thought and feel your whisper."

Finally; The number of sitters varies usually from about fifteen to twenty-five or more, a large proportion of whom, and sometimes nearly all, are usually strangers. Of those present a considerable number, sometimes all or nearly all, depending on the number of sitters, receive writings recognized by them as coming from some departed friend or acquaintance; and very rarely does there come a message addressed to a person not present. Now Keeler makes no list of the sitters that are to come, and has no possible means of knowing of what persons the circle will be composed until the commencement of the séance. Unless, therefore, he have the gift of prophecy, he cannot possibly prepare these messages beforehand.

I have received the following statement from Mr. Darius Lyman, late Chief of the Navigation Division of

the Treasury Department, an office which he held for twenty-four years:

The manifestations of spirit agency through P. L. O. A. Keeler are made under such conditions as to convince any candid and studious investigator, that they are not due to his action nor of any confederate. I refer particularly to the manifestations produced at what are called his "light" seances, and those for writing on slates.

I have been present probably at over a hundred of these seances, in which I have witnessed manifestations which to me were plainly physically impossible to be performed by him. I have had writing produced between closed slates which were wrapped by myself with cloths or handkerchiefs, when held jointly by the medium and myself; every precaution having been taken by me to have the surface of the slates thoroughly cleaned. I have obtained these writings with and without pencils, and at times in varied colors, when no colored crayons known to ordinary physics could have been used. In most instances I have noted by a watch the time occupied in writing, and have received in periods varying from two to five minutes, messages varying in number of the words written, from 72 in two minutes to 309 in five. I have received a message and had the tune of a drum-beat on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington accurately re-produced by taps on the slates while the message was writing, the taps being such as could not be produced by fingers or finger nails, the hands of the medium being visibly motionless.

In all the seances given by Mr. Keeler, when I have been present, I have seen no reasonable ground to suspect fraud, many of the facts being inexplicable on any hypothesis of that kind. I make these declarations freely and deliberately for the benefit only of candid investigators of Mr. Keeler's mediumship, and not for "respectable and scientific" Committees who have neither the candor to see a spiritual phenomenon should one occur, nor the courage to attest one if they were to see it.

D. LYMAN.

Washington, D. C.,
February 9, 1888.

It is proper I should state that Keeler often holds séances, by invitation, at private houses; and that at these séances the same manifestations occur as in his public ones, held at his own lodgings.

There are skeptics that may be willing to admit the truth of the foregoing statements, but will deem it a sufficient reply to them "that some of Kellar's and Hermann's tricks are just as mysterious and inexplicable as any of the manifestations I have recorded."

I admit the fact, but not the inference from it. Because certain manifestations have been produced by trick, it does not follow that certain other manifestations, differing from them in kind and in the circumstances under which

they occur, can ^{so} also be produced. When any professional juggler shall produce the identical manifestations that occur in the presence of spirit mediums, AND UNDER PRECISELY THE SAME CONDITIONS, the spirit theory of their production may have to be abandoned; but I have never yet read or heard of a single instance where this has been done.

I have often propounded a certain question to skeptics who believe all these manifestations to be jugglers' tricks, to which I have never received an answer.

I will repeat it here.

If the manifestations through Keeler, admittedly as inexplicable as those produced by Kellar or Hermann, are only jugglers' tricks, why does not Keeler, like his brother jugglers, announce them as such, and thus draw audiences that will net him greater returns in a week or two than he now receives in a whole year?

In view of the great number and variety, and conclusive nature of the facts I have presented in these letters, I claim it to be demonstrated

First. That the manifestations through Pierre L. O. A. Keeler are not produced by trick, but by extramundane agencies; and that your Report is therefore grossly unjust both to him personally, and to the cause of truth.

Secondly. That spirit return is a fact, and that there is, therefore, ANOTHER LIFE.

Yours respectfully,

FRANCIS J. LIPPITT.

PHYSICAL PROOFS

OF

ANOTHER LIFE,

GIVEN IN

Letters to the Seybert Commission;

BY

FRANCIS J. LIPPITT.

—o—

And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought; But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God. *Acts V:—38, 39.*

Celui qui, en dehors des mathématiques pures, prononce le mot IMPOSSIBLE, manque de prudence. *Arago: Annuaire 1853.*

—o—

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