

VI.

NOTES OF SÉANCES WITH D. D. HOME.

BY WILLIAM CROOKES, F.R.S.

In the year 1874 I published in a collected form various papers, dating from 1870 to 1874, describing inquiries made by myself, alone or with other observers, into the phenomena called Spiritual. In a paper reprinted from the *Quarterly Journal of Science*, for January, 1874, I announced my intention of publishing a book, which should contain my numerous printed and unprinted observations.

But this projected work has never seen the light. My excuse,—a real excuse, though not a complete justification,—lies in the extreme pressure of other work on my time and energies. The chemical and physical problems of my professional life have become more and more absorbing; and, on the other hand, few fresh opportunities have occurred of prosecuting my researches into “psychic force.” I must confess, indeed, that I have been disappointed with the progress of investigation into this subject during the last fifteen years. I see little abatement of the credulity on the one hand and the fraud on the other which have all along interfered, as I hold, with the recognition of new truth of profound interest.

The foundation of the Society for Psychical Research has, however, somewhat altered the situation. We have here a body of inquirers of whom the more prominent, so far as I can judge, are quite sufficiently critical in their handling of any evidence making for extraordinary phenomena, while they bring to the task that patience and diligence without which an investigation of this sort is doomed to failure. Invited to contribute to the Society for Psychical Research *Proceedings*, some of my notes on séances with D. D. Home, I feel I ought not to decline. I am not satisfied with these notes; which form, so to say, only a few bricks for an intended edifice it is not now probable I shall ever build. But, at least, they are accurate transcripts of facts which I still hold to be of deep importance to science. Their publication will, at any rate, show that I have not changed my mind; that on dispassionate review of statements put forth by me nearly twenty years ago I find nothing to retract or to alter. I have discovered no flaw in the experiments then made, or in the reasoning I based upon them.

I am too well aware there have been many exposures of fraud on the part of mediums; and that some members of the Society for Psychical Research have shown the possibility of fraud under circum-

stances where Spiritualists had too readily assumed it was not possible. I am not surprised at the evidence of fraud. I have myself frequently detected fraud of various kinds, and I have always made it a rule in weighing Spiritualistic evidence to assume that fraud may have been attempted, and ingeniously attempted, either by seen or unseen agents. I was on my guard even in D. D. Home's case, although I am bound to say that with him I never detected any trickery or deceit whatever, nor heard any first-hand evidence of such from other persons. At the same time, I should never demand that anyone should consider Home, or any other medium, as "incapable of fraud," nor should I pin my faith upon any experiment of my own or others which fraud could explain. The evidence for the genuineness of the phenomena obtained by Home in my presence seems to me to be strengthened rather than weakened by the discussions on conjuring, and the exposures of fraud which have since taken place. The object of such discussions is to transform *vague* possibilities of illusion and deception into *definite* possibilities; so far as this has yet been done, it has, I think, been made more clear that certain of Home's phenomena fall quite outside the category of marvels producible by sleight of hand or prepared apparatus.

But I must not be supposed to assert that all, or even most of, the phenomena recorded by me were such as no juggling could simulate. Many incidents,—as slight movements of the table, &c.,—were obviously and easily producible by Home's hands or feet. Such movements, &c., I have recorded,—not as in themselves proving anything strange,—but simply as forming part of a series of phenomena, some of which *do* prove, to my mind, the operation of that "new force" in whose existence I still firmly believe. Had I described these *séances* with a view to sensational effect, I should have omitted all the non-evidential phenomena, and thus have brought the marvels out in stronger relief. Such was not my object. In most cases the notes were written—primarily for my own information,—while the phenomena were actually going forward, but on some few occasions they were copied or expanded immediately after the *séance* from briefer notes taken at the time. They are here reprinted *verbatim*; and the petty details which render them tedious to read will supply the reader with all the material now available for detecting the imposture, if any, which my friends and I at the time were unable to discover.¹

My object in publishing these notes will have been attained if they should aid in inducing competent observers, in this or other countries, to repeat similar experiments with accurate care, and in a dispassionate

¹ The notes here published are accounts of selected *séances*, but in each case selected, the full account of the *séance* is given.

spirit. Most assuredly, so far as my knowledge of science goes, there is absolutely no reason *à priori* to deny the possibility of such phenomena as I have described. Those who assume—as is assumed by some popular writers—that we are now acquainted with all, or nearly all, or even with any assignable proportion, of the forces at work in the universe, show a limitation of conception which ought to be impossible in an age when the widening of the circle of our definite knowledge does but reveal the proportionately widening circle of our blank, absolute, indubitable ignorance.

(I.) WEDNESDAY, MAY 9th, 1871.—Sitting at 81, South Audley-street, (Miss Douglas's house). From 9 to 11 p.m.

Present :—Mr. D. D. Home (medium), Miss Douglas, Mrs. Gregory, Mr. O. R., Mr. W. F., Mrs. W. F., Mr. Crookes.

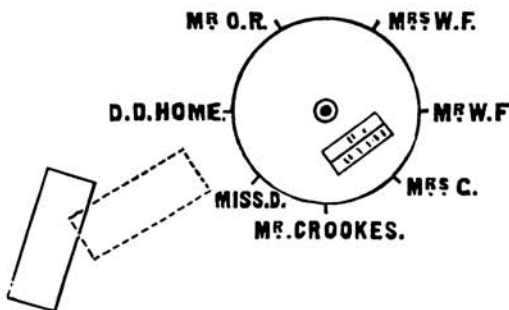
In the front drawing-room, at a lloo table on centre pillar and three feet, diameter three feet, weight 32lb., cloth on (occasionally turned up to give light below).

One candle on table, two on mantelpiece, one on side table. Towards end of sitting (during the fire test) the candle on the table and one on the mantelpiece were put out. The others were alight the whole time. An accordion was on the table.

A wood fire, somewhat dull, in the grate.

Temperature very comfortable all the evening.

Order of sitting :



A small sofa table stood about two feet from Miss Douglas and Mr. Home in the position shown in diagram. Miss Douglas commenced by reading aloud a few extracts from Robert Chambers's introduction to Mr. Home's book, *Incidents of my Life*.

Phenomena.—The table tilted several times in four or five directions at an angle of about 25deg., and kept inclined sufficiently long for those who wished to look under with a candle and examine how the hands of Mr. Home and the others present were touching it. Sometimes it stood on two legs, and sometimes it was balanced on one. I, who had brought a spring balance in my pocket, was now invited by Mr. Home to try an experiment in the alteration of weight.

As it would have been inconvenient without disturbing the sitting to have experimented on the total weight of the table, the balance was hooked under one edge of the table, and the force required to tilt it measured.

Experiment 1.—"Be light." An upward pull of 2lb. required to lift one of the feet off the ground, all hands lightly touching the top of the table.

Experiment 2.—"Be heavy." As soon as this was said, the table creaked, shuddered, and appeared to settle itself firmly into the floor. The effect was as if the power of a gigantic electro-magnet had been suddenly turned on, the table constituting the armature. All hands were, as before, very lightly touching the upper surface of the table with their fingers. A force of 36lb. was now required to raise the foot of the table from the floor. I lifted it up and down four or five times, and the index of the balance kept pretty constant at 36lb., not varying more than $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. Whilst this was going on, each person's hands were noticed. They were touching the table so lightly that their aggregate downward pressure could not have been many ounces. Mr. Home once lifted his hands for a moment quite off the table. His feet were tucked back under his chair the whole time.

Experiment 3.—"Be light." Conditions the same as before. An upward pull of 7lb. required to tilt the table.

Experiment 4.—"Be heavy." The same creaking noise as in Experiment 2 was again heard. Every person (except Mr. O. R. and myself, who was standing up trying the experiment) put the ends of the fingers *underneath* the table top, the palms being upwards and the thumbs visible, so that, if any force were unconsciously exerted, it should tend to diminish the weight. At the same time Mr. O. R. took a candle and stooped under the table to see that no one was touching the legs of the table with their knees or feet. I also stooped down occasionally to verify Mr. O. R.'s statement that all was fair beneath. Upon applying the spring balance, I saw that the table was pulled up at 45lb. Immediately this was announced I felt an increase of weight, and, after a few trials, the pull was increased to 48lb., at which point the index stood steady, the leg of the table being about 3in. off the floor.

Experiment 5.—"Be heavy." The conditions were the same as before, a little more care being taken by the sitters to keep their feet well tucked under their chairs. Hands touching the under side of the table top as before. The index of the balance rose steadily, without the table moving in the least, until it pointed to 46lb. At this point the table rose an inch, when the hook of the balance slipped off, and the table returned to its place with a crash. The iron hook had bent out sufficiently to prevent it holding the table firmly any longer, so the experiments were obliged to be discontinued.

(After the séance was over, the normal weight of the table was taken. Its total weight was 32lb. In order to tilt it in the manner described in the experiments a pull of 8lb. was required. When lifted straight up at three equi-distant points, the spring-balance being at one point, a pull of 10lb. was required. The accuracy of the balance could be depended on to about $\frac{1}{2}$ lb., not more.)

Raps were heard from different parts of the table and the floor, and the table quivered rapidly several times.

Mr. Home appeared slightly convulsed about the arms and body. Suddenly he said aloud, "Robert Chambers is here; I feel him." Three loud raps were immediately heard from the small sofa table about two feet behind Miss Douglas, and this table then slowly glided up to within five inches of Miss Douglas and Mr. Home. The movement was very steady and noiseless, and occupied about five seconds in going the distance of 20 inches. When it stopped, Mr. Home drew attention to the fact that both his feet were under his chair and all hands were on the table. He moved a little nearer to Mr. O. R. and turned his legs and feet as far away from the table as he could, asking the sitters to make themselves quite certain that he could not have produced the movement of the table. While this was being noticed, the small table again moved, this time slowly and a quarter of an inch at a time, until it was again close to Mr. Home and Miss Douglas.

A flower in a glass standing in the centre of the small table was moved, but not taken out of the glass.

Mr. Home and then Miss Douglas said they felt touched under the table. The sleeve of Miss Douglas's dress was pulled up and down several times in full view of all present. Mr. Home said he saw a hand doing it. No one else saw this; but Miss Douglas felt a hand, which, however, was invisible, put on her wrist immediately after.

Mr. Home held the accordion under the table by one hand, letting the keyed end hang downwards. Presently it commenced to sound, and then played "Ye Banks and Braes," &c., and other airs, and imitated an echo very beautifully. Whilst it was playing in Mr. Home's hand (his other hand being quietly on the table) the other gentlemen looked under the table to see what was going on. I took particular notice that, when the instrument was playing, Mr. Home held it lightly at the end opposite the keys, that Mr. Home's feet had boots on and were both quiet at some distance from the instrument, and that, although the keyed end was rising and falling vigorously and the keys moving as the music required, no hand, strings, wires, or anything else could be seen touching that end.

Mr. O. R. then held the accordion by the plain end, Mr. Home touching it at the same time. Presently it began to move and then commenced to play. Mr. Home then moved his hand away and the instrument continued playing for a short time in Mr. O. R.'s hand, both of Mr. Home's hands being then above the table.

Some questions were then asked and answers were given by raps and notes on the accordion. The alphabet being called for by five raps, the following message was spelled out:—"It is a glorious truth. It was the solace of my earth life and the triumph over the change called death. Robert Chambers."

A private message to Miss Douglas was given in the same manner.

The table was then tilted several times as before, and once rose completely off the ground to a height of about three inches.

Mr. Home sank back in his chair with his eyes closed and remained still for a few minutes. He then rose up in a trance and made signs for his eyes to be blindfolded. This was done. He walked about the room in an undecided sort of manner, came up to each of the sitters and made some remark to them. He went to the candle on a side table (close to

the large table) and passed his fingers backwards and forwards through the flame several times so slowly that they must have been severely burnt under ordinary circumstances. He then held his fingers up, smiled and nodded as if pleased, took up a fine cambric handkerchief belonging to Miss Douglas, folded it up on his right hand and went to the fire. Here he threw off the bandage from his eyes and by means of the tongs lifted a piece of red hot charcoal from the centre and deposited it on the folded cambric; bringing it across the room, he told us to put out the candle which was on the table, knelt down close to Mrs. W. F. and spoke to her about it in a low voice. Occasionally he fanned the coal to a white heat with his breath. Coming a little further round the room, he spoke to Miss Douglas saying, "We shall have to burn a very small hole in the handkerchief. We have a reason for this which you do not see." Presently he took the coal back to the fire and handed the handkerchief to Miss Douglas. A small hole about half an inch in diameter was burnt in the centre, and there were two small points near it, but it was not even singed anywhere else. (I took the handkerchief away with me and on testing it in my laboratory, found that it had not undergone the slightest chemical preparation which could have rendered it fire-proof.)

Mr. Home again went to the fire, and after stirring the hot coal about with his hand, took out a red-hot piece nearly as big as an orange, and putting it on his right hand, covered it over with his left hand so as to almost completely enclose it, and then blew into the small furnace thus extemporised until the lump of charcoal was nearly white-hot, and then drew my attention to the lambent flame which was flickering over the coal and licking round his fingers; he fell on his knees, looked up in a reverent manner, held up the coal in front and said: "Is not God good? Are not His laws wonderful?"

Going again to the fire, he took out another hot coal with his hand and holding it up said to me, "Is not that a beautiful large bit, William? We want to bring that to you. Pay no attention at present." The coal, however, was not brought. Mr. Home said: "The power is going," and soon came back to his chair and woke up.

Mr. O. R. left at 11 o'clock. After this, nothing particular took place.

The following refers to a somewhat similar incident:—

Extract from a letter from Mr. Crookes to Mrs. Honeywood, describing an incident at a Séance on April 28th, and incorporated in Mrs. Honeywood's notes of the Séance.

At Mr. Home's request, whilst he was entranced, I went with him to the fireplace in the back drawing-room. He said, "We want you to notice particularly what Dan is doing." Accordingly I stood close to the fire and stooped down to it when he put his hands in. He very deliberately pulled the lumps of hot coal off, one at a time, with his right hand and touched one which was bright red. He then said, "The power is not strong on Dan's hand, as we have been influencing the handkerchief most. It is more difficult to influence an inanimate body like that than living flesh, so, as the circumstances were favourable, we thought we would show you that we

could prevent a red-hot coal from burning a handkerchief. We will collect more power on the handkerchief and repeat it before you. Now!"

Mr. Home then waved the handkerchief about in the air two or three times, held it up above his head and then folded it up and laid it on his hand like a cushion: putting his other hand into the fire, took out a large lump of cinder red-hot at the lower part and placed the red part on the handkerchief. Under ordinary circumstances it would have been in a blaze. In about half a minute, he took it off the handkerchief with his hand, saying, "As the power is not strong, if we leave the coal longer it will burn." He then put it on his hand and brought it to the table in the front room, where all but myself had remained seated.

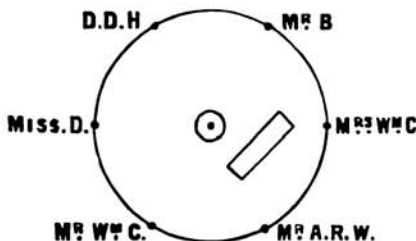
(Signed) WILLIAM CROOKES.

(II.) MONDAY, MAY 22nd, 1871.—Sitting at 81, South Audley-street, the residence of Miss Douglas. From 9.45 to 11 p.m.

Present:—Mr. D. D. Home (medium), Miss Douglas, Mr. B., Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace, Mrs. Wm. Crookes, Mr. Wm. Crookes.

In the front drawing-room, at a loo table, supported on centre pillar and three feet. Lighted with candles the whole of the evening.

Order of sitting:—



The small sofa table, mentioned in the account of the last séance at this house, was about two feet behind Miss Douglas. An accordion belonging to me was on the table, and a small candlestick and candle.

Phenomena.—In a few minutes a slight tremor of the table was felt. Mr. A. R. Wallace was touched. Then Mrs. Crookes felt her knee touched and her dress pulled. Miss Douglas's dress was pulled, and I was touched on my right knee as by a heavy hand firmly placed on it.

The table tilted up on two and sometimes on one leg several times, rising at the side opposite each person successively, whilst all who wished took the candle and examined underneath to see that no one of the party was doing it with the feet. Granting that Mr. Home might have been able, if he so desired, to influence mechanically the movement of the table, it is evident that he could only have done so in two directions, but here the table moved successively in six directions.

The table now rose completely off the ground several times, whilst the gentlemen present took a candle, and kneeling down, deliberately examined the position of Mr. Home's feet and knees, and saw the three feet of the table quite off the ground. This was repeated, until each observer expressed himself satisfied that the levitation was not produced by mechanical means on the part of the medium or any one else present.

The alphabet was now called for by five raps. The letters given out were taken down :—

“ We igh—”

Thinking this the commencement of a sentence we tried to get the next letter, but no response was given. Then we said that some letter had been given wrong. One thump said emphatically, “ No.” We then said, “ We have got the first word ‘ We ’ all right, but we want the second word.” “ Is *i* right ? ” “ Yes.” “ Is *g* right ? ” “ Yes.” “ Is *h* right ? ” “ Yes.”

After thinking for a moment it suddenly occurred to us that the word was “ Weigh,” and that it referred to an experiment I had come prepared to repeat—that of measuring the variation in weight of the table by means of a spring balance.

A perfect shower of raps showed that this interpretation was the correct one.

I accordingly repeated the experiments which were tried at the last sitting at this house, using a stronger spring balance.

Experiment 1.—“ Be light.” The table tilted, when the balance showed a weight of scarcely half a pound.

Experiment 2.—“ Be heavy.” The table now bore a pull of 20lb. before it tilted up on one side, all hands being placed under the top edge of the table, thumbs visible.

Experiment 3.—I now asked if the opposing force could be so applied as to cause the table to rise up off the ground quite horizontally when I was pulling. Immediately the table rose up completely off the ground, the top keeping quite horizontal, and the spring balance showing a pull of 23lb. During this experiment Mr. Home's hands were put on the table, the others being under as at first.

Experiment 4.—“ Be heavy.” All hands beneath the table top. It required a pull of 43lb. to lift the table from the floor this time.

Experiment 5.—“ Be heavy.” This time Mr. B. took a lighted candle and looked under the table to assure himself that the additional weight was not produced by anyone's feet or otherwise. Whilst he was there observing I tried with the balance and found that a pull of 27lb. was required to lift the table up. Mr. Home, Mr. A. R. Wallace, and the two ladies had their fingers fairly under the top of the table, and Mr. B. said that no one was touching the table beneath to cause the increase of weight.

When these experiments were finished we all sat quietly round the table for a few minutes, when suddenly the small sofa-table came up to within about six inches of Miss Douglas. It glided along with a quick, steady movement. It did not move again after it stopped the first time.

(Just before I sat down to the séance, remembering that this table had moved up to the circle apparently of its own accord the last time we had a séance here, I pushed the table a little away from its usual place, putting it just about two feet behind Miss Douglas's chair.

I took notice then that there was no string or anything else attached to it. After I had so placed it no one else went near it, so that its movement on this occasion was entirely beyond suspicion.)

Miss Douglas's chair moved partly round. On attempting to replace it as

before she said she could not move it, as it was firmly fixed to the floor. I attempted to pull it along, but it resisted all my efforts.

Mr. Home's chair then moved several times, and tilted up on two legs, whilst Mr. Home's feet were up in the chair in a semi-kneeling posture, and his hands before him not touching anything.

The table cloth in front of Mr. Home just at the edge of the table was bulged outwards as if a hand were beneath it, and we then saw a movement of the cloth as if fingers were moving under it.

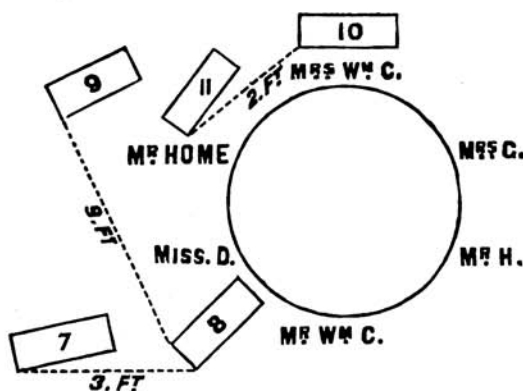
Mr. Home then took the accordion in one hand in his usual manner, and held it beneath the table. At first chords were sounded, and then a very beautiful piece with bass and treble was played. Each of the gentlemen in turn looked at the accordion under the table whilst it was playing.

Mr. A. R. Wallace then asked for "Home, sweet Home." A few bars of this air were immediately sounded. He looked under the table and said he saw a hand distinctly moving the instrument up and down, and playing on the keys. Mr. Home had one hand on the table and was holding the top end of the accordion, whilst Mr. A. R. Wallace saw this hand at the bottom end where the keys were.

(III.) MONDAY, JUNE 19th, 1871.—Sitting at 81, South Audley-street. From 9 to 11 p.m.

Present:—Mr. D. D. Home (medium), Miss Douglas, Mrs. Gregory, Mrs. Wm. Crookes, Mr. Wm. Crookes, Mr. H.

In the front drawing-room at the small round table three feet in diameter. Order of sitting, &c. :—



- 7.—Original position of small table.
- 8.—Position where table (7) was first taken to.
- 9.— " " " next "
- 10.—Small table behind Mrs. Wm. Crookes.
- 11.—Position where table (10) was taken to.

Just before sitting down, remembering that the table (7) had been moved on the last occasion, I went to it and pushed it into the furthest corner of the room.

After sitting for some little time we had raps, and movements of the

table. I asked if I might weigh the table when Mr. Home was not touching it at all.—“Yes.”

Experiment 1.—I thereupon fixed the spring balance to it, and asking for it to be made heavy tried to lift it off the ground. It required a pull of 23lb. to raise it. During this time Mr. Home was sitting back in his chair, his hands quite off the table and his feet touching those on each side of him.

Experiment 2.—“Be heavy” again. Mr. H. now took a candle, and stooping down looked under the table to see that no one was touching it there, whilst I was observing the same at the top. Mr. Home's hands and feet were the same as before. The balance now showed a tension of 22lb.

Experiment 3 was now tried, Mr. Home being further from the table. A pull of 17lb. was required.

Experiment 4.—When we said “Be light,” the table rose at 12lb. On trying afterwards the normal pull required to tilt it, we found it to be 14lb.

It was now proposed to put out the candles and sit by the light coming in from the windows, which was quite sufficient to enable us to see each other, and the principal articles of furniture in the room.

We presently heard a noise in the back drawing-room as if a man had got off the couch and was coming to us. Mrs. Wm. Crookes said it came up to her, and she then felt a pair of large hands on her head, then on her shoulders and on her back. Her chair was then moved partly round towards Mrs. Gregory away from Mr. Home.

A noise and crash as of something falling was now heard behind Mrs. Wm. Crookes's chair, and the small table (10) was pressed up close to her. Her chair was tilted up till she was jammed between the back of the chair and the table we were sitting round, and her chair resisted all her efforts to press it down.

Raps came, and a message to get a light.

On lighting the candle it was seen that the noise had been caused by a picture which had been on the table resting against the wall, falling down on to the floor. It was uninjured. The table (10) had been moved up close to Mrs. Wm. Crookes, between her and Mr. Home.

Mr. Home then took the accordion in his right hand in the usual manner, and placing his left on the table it was held both by Miss Douglas and Mrs. Wm. Crookes. The light was then put out, and the following message was spelt:—

“The Four Seasons. Winter first.”

“Spring.—The Birth of the Flowers.”

“Birds in Summer.”

The above messages were given whilst the piece was being played. It would be impossible to give any idea of the beauty of the music, or its expressive character. During the part typifying summer we had a beautiful accompaniment, the chirping and singing of the birds being heard along with the accordion. During autumn, we had “The Last Rose of Summer” played.

Home said that the spirit playing was a stranger to him. It was a high and very powerful one, and was a female who had died young.

Mrs. Wm. Crookes said: "Is it my cousin M——? It has flashed into my mind that it is she."

Answer by raps: "Yes."

We then heard a rustling noise on a heliotrope which was growing in a flower-pot standing on the table between Mr. Home and Mrs. Wm. Crookes. On looking round Mrs. Wm. Crookes saw what appeared to be a luminous cloud on the plant. (Mr. Home said it was a hand.) We then heard the crackling as of a sprig being broken off, and then a message came:—

"Four Ellen."

Immediately the white luminous cloud was seen to travel from the heliotrope to Mrs. Wm. C.'s hand, and a small sprig of the plant was put into it. She had her hand then patted by a delicate female hand. She could not see the hand itself, but only a halo of luminous vapour over her hand.

The table (7) was now heard to be moving, and it was seen to glide slowly up to the side of Miss Douglas, to the position marked (8), about three feet. Miss Douglas cried out, "Oh! Oh! How very curious! I have had something carried round my neck. It is now put into my hand. It is a piece of heath." A message came:—

"In Memoriam."

Mr. Home said, "Count the number of flowers on the sprig. There is a meaning in all this." Eleven were counted. (Mr. Robert Chambers had eleven children.)

The candle (which had been lighted to ascertain this) was again put out. Mr. Home took the accordion in his right hand, whilst his other hand was held by Miss Douglas and Mrs. Wm. Crookes. The others present also joined hands. The accordion played, and we then saw something white move from the table close to Miss Douglas, pass behind her and Mr. Home, and come into the circle between him and Mrs. Wm. Crookes. It floated about for half a minute, keeping a foot above the table. It touched Mrs. Wm. Crookes, then went round near to the others as if floating about with a circular movement. It presently settled on the backs of Miss Douglas's, Mr. Home's, and Mrs. Wm. Crookes's hands, which were grasped together. The message was given:—

"Light, and look,"

and we then saw that the floating object had been a china card plate with cards in it, which had previously been on the table behind Miss Douglas.

The light was again put out, and we then heard a sticking and scraping along the floor, and then a heavy bump against the door. Very loud raps were then heard on the table and in other parts of the room. Movements of the table were felt, and then all was quiet. We lighted the candle and saw that the small table which had already moved up to Miss Douglas, had travelled right across the room, a distance of nine feet, and, thumping against the door, had produced the noise we had all heard.

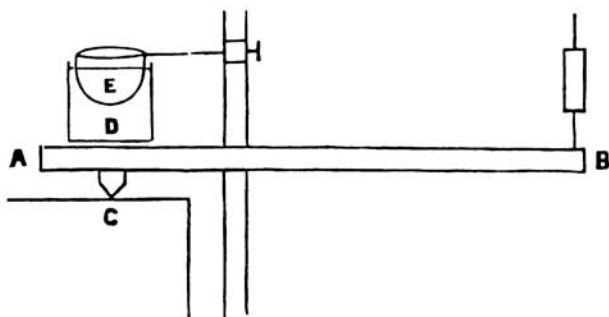
Nothing else took place after this.

(IV.) WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21st, 1871.—Sitting at 20, Mornington-road (private residence of Mr. Crookes). From 8.40 to 10.30 p.m.

Present.—Mr. D. D. Home (medium), Mrs. Wm. Crookes, Mr. Wm. Crookes, Mrs. Humphrey, Mr. C. Gimmingham, Mr. Serjt. Cox, Mr. Wm. Crookes, Mrs. Wm. Crookes, Miss A. Crookes.

In the dining-room lighted by one gas burner. Round the dining table without a leaf in it.

On the table was an accordion belonging to myself; a long thin wooden lath; a pencil and some paper; and by the side, partly resting on the table, was an apparatus for testing alteration in the weight of a body. It consisted of a



mahogany board, A B, 36 inches long, 9 inches wide, and 1 inch thick, supported at the end B by a spring balance, and resting at C on the flat stand by means of a wooden fulcrum cut to a knife edge and 3 inches from the end A. D is a glass bowl of water, standing on the board in such a manner that its weight partly fell between the fulcrum C and the end B, producing with the weight of the board a tension of 5lb. on the spring balance. E is a hemispherical copper vessel, perforated at the bottom and firmly supported on a massive iron stand rising from the floor. E was so arranged that it dipped into water in D, but was 2 inches from D all round the circumference, and 5½ inches from the bottom. It was sufficiently firmly supported to prevent any knocking or pushing to which it might be subjected from being communicated to the glass vessel D and thence to the board and spring balance. I and my assistant had well tested it in this respect beforehand.¹

Under the table was the wire cage described previously,² and three Groves cells were in connection with the surrounding wire. A commutator in the circuit prevented a current circulating till I pressed down a key.

Phenomena.—Almost immediately very strong vibrations of the table were felt. Answers to questions "Yes" and "No" were given by these vibrations.

Mr. Home's hands were contracted in a very curious and painful looking manner. He then got up and gently placed the fingers of his right hand in the copper vessel E, carefully avoiding coming near any other part of the apparatus. Mrs. Wm. Crookes, who was sitting near the apparatus, saw the end B of the board gently descend and then rise again. On referring to the automatic register it showed that an increased tension of 10 ounces had been produced.

Nothing more took place.

¹ Compare *Quarterly Journal of Science* for October, 1871.

² See *Quarterly Journal of Science* for July, 1871.

(V.) WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21st, 1871.—Sitting at 20, Mornington-road. From 10.45 to 11.45. (This séance was held shortly after the previous one. We all got up, moved about, opened the windows, and changed our positions. Miss A. Crookes then left, and we proposed sitting down again.)

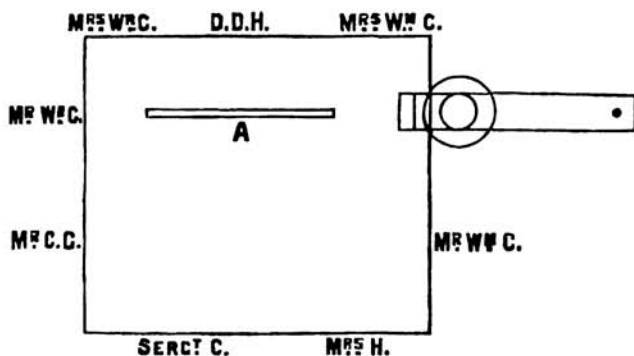
Present :—Mr. D. D. Home (medium), Mrs. Wr. Crookes, Mr. Wr. Crookes, Mrs. Humphrey, Mr. C. Gimingham, Mr. Serjt. Cox, Mr. Wm. Crookes, Mrs. Wm. Crookes.

In the dining-room. The table and apparatus the same as before.

The light was diminished, but there was still light enough to enable us to distinguish each other plainly and see every movement. The apparatus was also distinctly visible.

The automatic register was pushed up close to the index of the balance.

We sat in the following order :—



A was a lath already mentioned.¹

Almost immediately a message came, "Hands off." After sitting quiet for a minute or two, all holding hands, we heard loud raps on the table; then on the floor by the weight apparatus. The apparatus was then moved and the spring balance was heard to move about strongly. We then had the following message :—

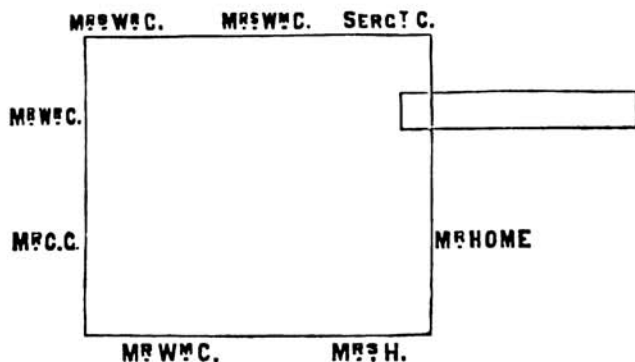
"Weight altered a little. Look."

I then got up and looked at the register. It had descended to 14lb., showing an additional tension of (14—5=) 9lb.

As this result had been obtained when there was scarcely light enough to see the board and index move, I asked for it to be repeated when there was more light. The gas was turned up and we sat as before. Presently the board was seen to move up and down (Mr. Home being some distance off and not touching the table, his hands being held), and the index was seen to descend to 7lb., where the register stopped. This showed a tension of 7—5=2lb.

¹ See Séance IV.

Mr. Home now told us to alter our position. We now sat as follows :—



A message was given :—

“ All hands except Dan’s off the table.”

Mr. Home thereupon moved his chair to the extreme corner of the table and turned his feet quite away from the apparatus close to Mrs. H. Loud raps were heard on the table and then on the mahogany board, and the latter was shaken rather strongly up and down. The following message was then given :—

“ We have now done our utmost.”

On going to the spring balance it was seen by the register to have descended to 9lb., showing an increase of tension of $(9-5=)$ 4lb.

The apparatus was now removed away from the table, and we returned to our old places (see first diagram).

We sat still for a few minutes, when a message came :—

“ Hands off the table, and all joined.”

We therefore sat as directed.

Just in front of Mr. Home and on the table, in about the position shown at A on the first diagram, was a thin wooden lath $23\frac{1}{4}$ inches long, $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide, and $\frac{3}{8}$ inch thick, covered with white paper. It was plainly visible to all, and was one foot from the edge of the table.

Presently the end of this lath, pointing towards Mr. Wr. Crookes, rose up in the air to the height of about 10 inches. The other end then rose up to a height of about five inches, and the lath then floated about for more than a minute in this position, suspended in the air, with no visible means of support. It moved sideways and waved gently up and down, just like a piece of wood on the top of small waves of the sea. The lower end then gently sank till it touched the table and the other end then followed.

Whilst we were all speaking about this wonderful exhibition of force the lath began to move again, and rising up as it did at first, it waved about in a somewhat similar manner. The startling novelty of this movement having now worn off, we were all enabled to follow its motions with more accuracy. Mr. Home was sitting away from the table at least three feet from the lath all this time ; he was apparently quite motionless, and his hands were

tightly grasped, his right by Mrs. Wr. Crookes and his left by Mrs. Wm. Crookes. Any movement by his feet was impossible, as, owing to the large cage being under the table, his legs were not able to be put beneath, but were visible to those on each side of him. All the others had hold of hands. As soon as this was over the following message was given :—

“ We have to go now ; but before going we thank you for your patience. Mary sends love to aunt, and will play another time.”

The séance then broke up at a quarter to twelve.

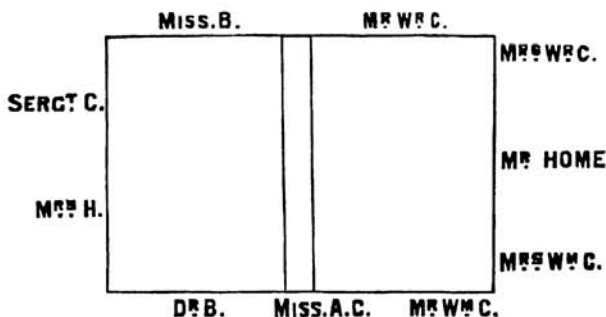
(VI.) FRIDAY, JUNE 23rd, 1871. Sitting at 20, Mornington-road. From 8.30 to 11 p.m.

Present :—Mr. D. D. Home (medium), Mrs. Wr. Crookes, Mr. Wr. Crookes, Miss Bird, Serjt. Cox, Mrs. Humphrey, Dr. Bird, Miss A. Crookes, Mr. Wm. Crookes, Mrs. Wm. Crookes.

In the dining-room ; lighted sometimes by one gas burner, sometimes by salted spirit lamp, sometimes by light from street.

The dining-table had no flap in it, but was slightly opened in the centre (about four inches). On the table were the accordion, a small hand bell, lath, paper, pencil, phosphorus half under water, and a spirit lamp with a salted wick.

Order of sitting :—



The cloth was on the table all this time.

At first we sat with one gas burner alight.

After sitting for about 10 minutes the table vibrated strongly, and gave a definite number of vibrations at our request on two or three occasions. It felt like a strong, quick shudder passing through it.

Mr. Home now took the accordion in the usual manner and held it under the table. It was presently sounded and notes played. During this time Miss Bird and Dr. Bird got under the table and saw the movement. The gas was now put out and the spirit lamp lighted. The yellow flame made everything look very ghastly and quite took the colour out of Mrs. Wm. Crookes's coral ornaments. She took off her coral necklace, and laid it on the table cloth, just over the opening in the table by the spirit lamp. In a short

time something poked up the cloth and moved the corals, repeating the movement two or three times.¹

Mr. Home then put the accordion on the floor, and placed both his hands on the table. In a short time we all heard a movement of the accordion under the table, and accordingly Mr. Home placed one hand in Mrs. Wm. Crookes's hands, the other in Mrs. Wr. Crookes's hands, and placed both his feet beneath my feet. In this manner it was physically impossible for him to have touched the accordion with hands or feet. The lamp also gave plenty of light to allow all present seeing any movement on his part. The accordion now commenced to sound, and then played several notes and bars. Every one present expressed themselves quite convinced that this result could not possibly have been effected by Mr. Home's agency.

Mr. Wr. Crookes now said that the accordion was brought up to his knees and pressed against them. He put his hand down and took it by the handle. It then played in his hand, Mr. Home's hands and feet being held by others as before. Presently Mr. Wr. Crookes said that the accordion had left his hand (which he then put on to the table). We could hear it moving about under the table, and then it pressed up against my knees, and on putting my hand down I felt the handle turned into my hand. I held it for a minute but it did not play. I then gave it to Mr. Home, and it then played in his right hand a tune which Serjt. Cox had asked for, "Ye Banks and Braes," &c.

After this a very beautiful piece of music was played. It was remarked, "This must be the music of the spheres." A message was given:—

"This is."

After a little time the music stopped and we turned the light lower, but still

¹ Miss Bird writes:—

I remember the circumstances stated in this séance. I had noticed that the necklace worn by Mrs. Wm. Crookes looked green. I asked her why her beads were green. She assured me they were her corals, and to convince me the necklace was passed into my hands. Instead of passing the necklace back I simply put it opposite me in the middle of the table. Almost as soon as I had placed the necklace it rose in a spiral shape. I called out eagerly to my brother, Dr. Bird, to look at the extraordinary conduct of the threaded corals, and whilst I was endeavouring to get his attention the erect necklace quietly subsided in a coil on the table. I have often recalled the incident, and although a sceptic by instinct, this one strange experience has made it impossible for me to doubt the assertions of others whose judgment is clear and whose uprightness is above suspicion.

October, 1889.

ALICE L. BIRD.

To this Dr. Bird adds:—

I recollect my sister calling out to me, "Look, look, at the necklace," but at that moment my attention was directed elsewhere, and I did not actually see the phenomenon in question.

GEORGE BIRD.

At the moment this occurred I was writing my notes and only caught sight of the necklace as it was settling down from its first movement. It made one or two slight movements afterwards, and, as I state, it seemed to me as if it had been moved from below. I mentioned this at the time and was then told by Miss Bird and others that the necklace had behaved as is now described by her. Not having seen it myself I did not alter the statement in my note-book.

W. CROOKES.

keeping enough to enable us to see plainly all that was going on. The music commenced again strongly, and then Mr. Home brought the accordion over the top of the table and held it opposite to Dr. Bird. We then all saw it contracting and expanding vigorously, and heard it emitting sounds, Mr. Home part of this time supporting the instrument on his little finger tip by means of a string I had tied round the handle.

Serjt. Cox held a flower under the table with the request that it might be taken and given to a lady. It was soon taken from his hand, and after a considerable time, when the circumstance was almost forgotten, a white object was laid on the edge of the table, between Miss Bird and Mr. Wr. Crookes, and she said her dress was pulled very much. As the object moved about it was seen to be Serjt. Cox's flower. The message then came :—

“ We gave it you. A flower.”

Mr. Home then went into a trance, spoke a little to Mrs. Wr. Crookes in a low tone, and then got up. He walked about the room in an undecided sort of way, but finally sat down again, saying it all felt confused, and then woke.

A message was then given :—

“ Hands off the table.”

We accordingly removed our hands and joined hands all round. In a minute a slight movement of my note-book was heard, and I could see that a volume (*Incidents in my Life*), which was resting on the leaves to keep them down, was gradually sliding over it in jerks about an eighth of an inch at a time. The motion was visible to all present and the noise was also plainly heard by everyone. Nothing more than this took place, and we soon had the message :—

“ We find we have no more power.”

The meeting then broke up.

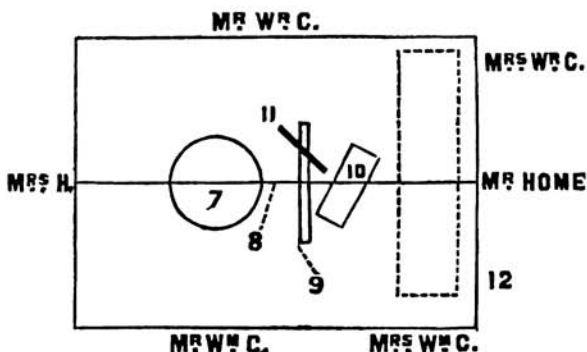
During the latter part of the evening Mrs. Wm. Crookes, who was sitting near Mr. Home, felt her hands and arm constantly touched and stroked, and the form of fingers was for some time moving about under the cloth close to her. These were felt by myself and Miss A. Crookes, and our hands were patted by them at our request. Mrs. Wm. Crookes also saw a delicate finger and thumb playing about a rose in Mr. Home's coat and plucking the petals one at a time and laying some on the table by her side and giving others to Mrs. Wr. Crookes. Three times she saw an entire hand rise up and pass quite over her own hands, which were on the table. It was small, plump, and delicately shaped, ending at the wrist in a cloud.

At another time luminous appearances were seen on Mr. Home's head and before his face. All present saw so much, and Mrs. Wm. Crookes said they were hands.

(VII.) SUNDAY, JULY 16th, 1871.—Sitting at 20, Mornington-road.

Present:—Mr. D. D. Home (medium), Mrs. Wr. Crookes, Mr. Wr. Crookes, Mrs. Humphrey, Mr. Wm. Crookes, Mrs. Wm. Crookes.

In the following order :—



7—Is a bouquet of flowers which my wife and I had brought from Brook Green this evening. They had been given to the servant to arrange, and were brought into the room and put on the table *after* we had all sat down and the séance had commenced.

8—Is the part of the crack in the table subsequently referred to.

9—Is the wooden wand. 10—Is a sheet of note-paper. 11—Is a pencil.

At the first part of the séance the phonautograph¹ was on the table in front of Mr. Home, and I sat or stood at position 12.

On this occasion I asked for the spirits not to rap on the membrane, but to press on it as in the experiment to make the board light and heavy.

This was accordingly done, and 10 tracings of curves were taken on the smoked glass :—

No. 1.—Mr. Home's hand on edge of drum.

No. 2. { Mrs. Wr. Crookes's fingers on edge of drum, and Mr. Home's

No. 3. { hands touching hers.

No. 4.—Mr. Home's fingers on edge of drum.

No. 5.—Mr. Home's fingers on support not touching the drum.

No. 6.—Mr. Home's fingers touching the membrane. On looking at this I remarked that this curve might have been produced by pressure of the fingers. The message was then given :—

“Hands off table.”

No. 7.—Mr. Home's hands on the table, no one else touching it.

No. 8.—Mr. Home's hand held over the parchment, fingers pointing downwards quite still.

No. 9.—The same as No. 8.

No. 10.—Mr. Home's fingers touching stand ; not touching the drum or parchment.

After taking these tracings the phonautograph was removed, and we sat down quietly in the positions shown on diagram. The room was sufficiently

¹ For a description of the phonautograph see *Quarterly Journal of Science* for October, 1871.

lighted by means of two spirit lamps with soda flames placed on the top of the gaselier.

After a few minutes the wooden wand moved a little on the table, gently sliding along. It then raised itself up at one end and then fell down again. Next it lifted up sideways and turned half over. It continued moving about in this manner for several minutes. Mr. Home said he saw a hand over the lath moving it about. No one else saw the hand.

The flowers in the bouquet were moved and rustled about several times.

A message was then given, the answers being sometimes given by raps on the table and sometimes by the wand rising up and striking the table three times in rapid succession :—

“A prayer.”

Mr. Home took the accordion in the usual manner and we then were favoured with the most beautiful piece of music I ever heard. It was very solemn and was executed perfectly : the “fingering” of the notes was finer than anything I could imagine. During this piece, which lasted for about 10 minutes, we heard a man’s rich voice¹ accompanying it in one corner of the room, and a bird whistling and chirping.

Mr. Home then held his hand over the bouquet and shook it (his hand) with a rapid quivering movement.

I asked if the pencil would be taken and a word written on the paper before our eyes. The pencil was moved and lifted up two or three times, but it fell down again. The lath moved up to the pencil and seemed trying to help it, but it was of no use.

A message was given :—

“It is impossible for matter to pass through matter ; but we will show you what we can do.”

We waited in silence. Presently Mrs. Wm. Crookes said she saw a luminous appearance over the bouquet. Mr. Wm. Crookes said he saw the same, and Mr. Home said he saw a hand moving about.

A piece of ornamental grass about 15 inches long here moved out of the bouquet, and was seen to slowly disappear just in front at the position (8) on the plan, as if it were passing through the table.

Immediately after it had disappeared through the table Mrs. Wm. Crookes saw a hand appear from beneath the table, between her and Mr. Home, holding the piece of grass. It brought it up to her shoulder, tapped it against her two or three times with a noise audible to all, and then took the grass down on to the floor, where the hand disappeared. Only Mrs. Wm. Crookes and Mr. Home saw the hand ; but we all saw the movements of the piece of grass, which were as I have described.

It was then told us that the grass had been passed through the division in the table. On measuring the diameter of this division I found it to be barely $\frac{1}{8}$ th inch, and the piece of grass was far too thick to enable me to force it

¹ See incident on p. 122.

through without injuring it. Yet it passed through the chink very quietly and smoothly and did not show the least signs of pressure.

The message was then given by notes on the accordion :—

“ God bless you. Good night.”

A parting tune was then played on the accordion, and the séance then broke up at half-past 11.

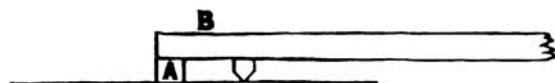
(VIII.) SUNDAY, JULY 30th, 1871. Sitting at 20, Mornington-road.

Present :—Mr. D. D. Home, Mr. Wm. Crookes, Mrs. Wm. Crookes, Mrs. Humphrey, Mr. Wr. Crookes, Mrs. Wr. Crookes, Mrs. I., Miss A. Crookes, Mr. H. Crookes, Mr. T., and at 11 p.m. Lord A.

In the dining-room round the dining-table.

During the former part of the evening the gas was lighted ; during the latter part the room was illuminated by two spirit lamps.

The first experiment tried was the alteration of the weight of the board by means of the improved apparatus, by which the movements are registered on smoked glass. In order to meet Mr. G.'s objection the short end of the board was firmly supported on a foot (A) in such a manner that no amount



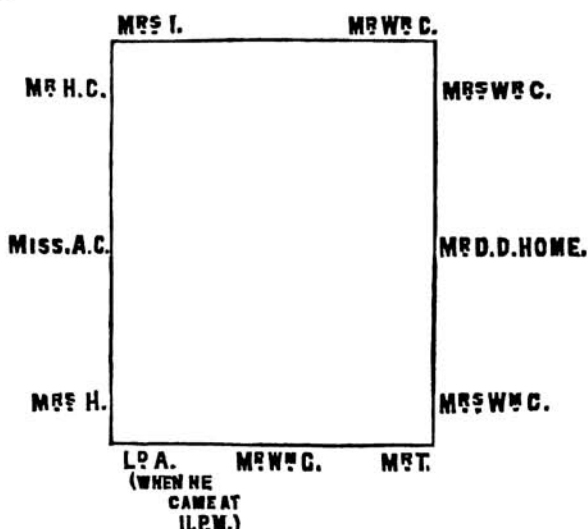
of pressure of the hands at (B) produced any appreciable movement of the long end. The adjustments were made and well tested by myself before Mr. Home entered the room.

I took Mr. Home's two hands and placed them myself in the proper position on the board, the tips of his fingers being (at B) just half-way from the extremity to the fulcrum. Mrs. Wm. Crookes, who was sitting next to Mr. Home, and by the side of the apparatus, watched his hands the whole time, and I also watched him whilst the plate of glass was moving. Six plates were tried and good results obtained. The experiments were not tried directly one after the other, but when all was ready Mr. Home generally told me when to set the clock going, saying that he felt an influence on the instrument or that he saw a spirit standing near. On one or two occasions loud raps were heard on the board, and the signal to set the clock going was given at my request by three raps. The board sometimes swayed sideways as well as vertically.

During the progress of one of these experiments the chair in which I had been sitting, which was standing near the apparatus, was seen to move up close to the table.

The register of the index showed a maximum pull of 2lb.

The apparatus was removed, and we took our seats round the table in the following positions :—



Raps occurred in different parts of the table when I placed my hands there. Raps were then given on the wooden lath when Mr. Home had hold of one end.

The accordion was held by Mr. Home in the usual position under the table. Whilst it played Mrs. I. looked beneath and saw it playing. Mr. Home removed his hand altogether from it, and held both hands above the table. During this Mrs. I. said she saw a luminous hand playing the accordion.

The gas was now turned out, and three spirit lamps were lighted.

Loud raps were heard, and the planchette moved across a sheet of paper, leaving a mark with the pencil.

The lath moved some inches.

The accordion, which had been left by Mr. Home under the table, now began to play and move about without anyone touching it. It dropped on to my foot, then dragged itself away, playing all the time, and went to Mrs. I. It got on to her knees.

Mr. Home then took it in his hand, where it played, and delivered the following message by chords in the usual way :—

“Our joy and thankfulness to have been allowed to make our presence manifest. We thank you for your patience and we thank GOD for His love.”

Mr. Home got up and stood behind in full view of all, holding the accordion out at arm's length. We all saw it expanding and contracting and heard it playing a melody. Mr. Home then let go of the accordion, which went behind his back and there continued to play; his feet being visible and also his two hands, which were in front of him.

Mr. Home then walked to the open space in the room between Mrs. I.'s chair and the sideboard and stood there quite upright and quiet. He then said, "I'm rising, I'm rising"; when we all saw him rise from the ground slowly to a height of about six inches, remain there for about 10 seconds, and then slowly descend. From my position I could not see his feet, but I distinctly saw his head, projected against the opposite wall, rise up, and Mr. Wr. Crookes, who was sitting near where Mr. Home was, said that his feet were in the air. There was no stool or other thing near which could have aided him. Moreover, the movement was a smooth continuous glide upwards.

Whilst this was going on we heard the accordion fall heavily to the ground. It had been suspended in the air behind the chair where Mr. Home had been sitting. When it fell Mr. Home was about 10ft. from it.

Mr. Home still standing behind Mrs. I. and Mr. Wr. Crookes, the accordion was both seen and heard to move about behind him without his hands touching it. It then played a tune without contact and floating in the air.

Mr. Home then took the accordion in one hand and held it out so that we could all see it (he was still standing up behind Mrs. I. and Mr. Wr. Crookes). We then saw the accordion expand and contract and heard a tune played. Mrs. Wm. Crookes and Mr. Home saw a light on the lower part of the accordion, where the keys were, and we then heard and saw the keys clicked and depressed one after the other fairly and deliberately, as if to show us that the power doing it, although invisible (or nearly so) to us, had full control over the instrument.

A beautiful tune was then played whilst Mr. Home was standing up holding the accordion out in full view of everyone.

Mr. Home then came round behind me and telling me to hold my left arm out placed the accordion under my arm, the keys hanging down and the upper part pressing upwards against my upper arm. He then left go and the accordion remained there. He then placed his two hands one on each of my shoulders. In this position, no one touching the accordion but myself, and every one noticing what was taking place, the instrument played notes but no tune.

Mr. Home then sat down in his chair, and we were told by raps to open the table about an inch or an inch and a-half.

Mr. T. touched the point of the lath, when raps immediately came on it. The planchette, which was on the table resting on a sheet of paper, now moved a few inches.

Sounds were heard on the accordion, which was on the floor, not held by Mr. Home.

The corner of the paper next to Mrs. Wm. Crookes (on which the planchette was standing) moved up and down. (These three last phenomena were going on simultaneously.)

I felt something touch my knee; it then went to Mrs. I., then to Miss A. Crookes.

Whilst this was going on I held the bell under the table, and it was taken from me and rung round beneath. It was then given to Mrs. I. by a hand which she described as soft and warm.

The lath was now seen to move about a little.

Mrs. Wm. Crookes saw a hand and fingers touching the flower in Mr. Home's button-hole. The flower was then taken by the hand and given to Mrs. I. and the green leaf was in a similar manner given to Mr. T.

Mrs. Wm. Crookes and Mr. Home saw the hand doing this, the others only saw the flower and leaf moving through the air.

Mrs. Wm. Crookes held a rose below the table ; it was touched and then taken.

The sound as of a drum was heard on the accordion.

The lath lifted itself up on its edge, then reared itself upon one end and fell down. It then floated up four inches above the table, and moved quite round the circle, pointing to Mrs. Wm. Crookes. It then rose up and passed over our heads outside the circle.

The planchette moved about a good deal, marking the paper.

The cloth was dragged along the table.

Whilst the lath was moving round the circle, the accordion played a tune in Mr. Home's hand whilst Mrs. Wm. Crookes's hand was also on it.

Mrs. Wm. Crookes put her hand near the lath, when it came up to it, and moved about it very much.

The paper on which the planchette was resting moved about us as if by a hand. Many present saw a hand doing it. (Mr. Home and Mrs. Wm. Crookes saw this hand.)

Mr. H. Crookes saw a luminous hand come up between Mr. Home and Mrs. Wm. Crookes.

Some time during the evening Mrs. Wm. Crookes's handkerchief, which had been in her pocket, was taken out of it by a hand.

I saw something white moving about in the further corner of the room (diagonal to door) under a chair. On my remarking this, a message was given by raps :—

“William ! take it.”

On getting up and taking it I saw that it was my wife's pocket handkerchief tied in a knot, and having the stalk of the rose which had been taken from her tied up in it. The place where I picked up the handkerchief was fifteen feet from where she had been sitting.

A glass water bottle which was on the table now floated up and rapped against the planchette.

Mr. Home said : “I see a face. I see Philip's face. Philip ! Brother !”

The water and tumbler now rose up together, and we had answers to questions by their tapping together whilst floating in the air about eight inches above the table, and moving backwards and forwards from one to the other of the circle.

Mr. H. Crookes said a hand was tickling his knee.

A finger was protruded up the opening of the table between Miss A. Crookes and the water bottle.

Miss A. Crookes, Mr. H. Crookes, and Mrs. I. were then touched.

Fingers came up the opening of the table a second time and waved about.

The lath, which on its last excursion had settled in front of the further window, quite away from the circle, now moved along the floor four or five times very noisily. It then came up to Mr. T., and passed into the circle

over his shoulder. It settled on the table and then rose up again, pointing to Mrs. Wm. Crookes's mouth.

The lath then went to the water bottle and pushed it several times nearly over, to move it away from the opening in the table. The lath then went endways down the opening.

The tumbler moved about a little.

The lath moved up through the opening in the table and answered "Yes" and "No" to questions, by bobbing up and down three times or once.

A hand was seen by some, and a luminous cloud by others, pulling the flowers about which were in a stand on the table. A flower was then seen to be carried deliberately and given to Mrs. Wr. Crookes.

Another flower was taken by the hand and brought over to Mrs. Wm. Crookes; it was dropped between her and Mr. Home.

Raps then said :—

"We must go."

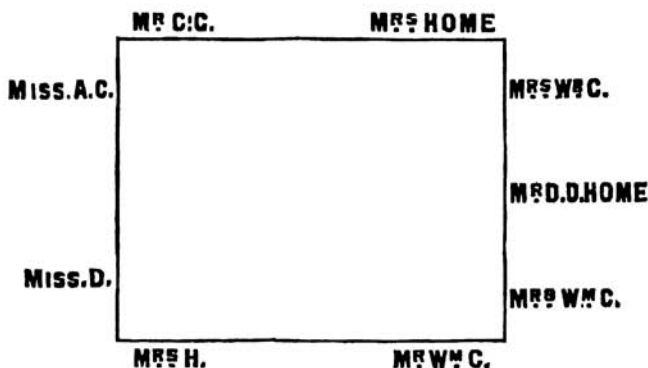
The raps then commenced loudly all over the room and got fainter and fainter until they became inaudible.

The séance then broke up.

(IX.) SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 25th, 1871.—Sitting at 20, Mornington-road. From 9.15 p.m. to 11.30 p.m.

Present :—Mr. D. D. Home (medium), Mrs. Home, Miss Douglas, Mrs. Humphrey, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Crookes, Mrs. Wr. Crookes, Miss Crookes, Mr. C. Gimmingham.

In the dining-room round the dining-table; no leaf in.



On the table were two glass troughs of flowers; accordion; paper; planchette; some marked pieces of paper; pencils; handbell; spirit lamps; matches, &c. A cloth was on. The lath was on the table.

There was a good fire in the room, which, however, got low towards the end of the sitting, and a gas light was burning during the greater part of the time. When that was put out there was still light enough in the room from the fire and the street to enable us to distinguish each other, and see the objects on the table.

We had scarcely sat down a minute when raps were heard from different parts of the table; a strong vibration of our chairs and the table was felt, and sounds like thumps on the floor were heard. A curious metallic tapping sound was heard on the iron screw of the table.

A message:—"Selfish," in reply to a remark I made.

A rustling was heard on the table, and one of the glass flower troughs was seen to move along by jerks, till it had travelled about two inches and had got a little on to a large sheet of paper. This movement continued whilst all were watching it. Mr. Home's hands were quiet in front of him.

The wooden lath was then seen to slide an inch or so backwards and forwards.

Mr. Home took the accordion in the usual manner, holding it under the table. It immediately began to sound. Mr. Home then brought it from under the table (he said it appeared to move of its own accord, dragging his hand after it), playing all the time, and at last held it hanging down at the back of his chair in a very constrained attitude, his feet being under the table and his other hand on the table. In this position the instrument played chords and separate notes, but not any definite tune. The sounds on it became louder and the table began to vibrate; this got stronger and stronger until the noise of the accordion playing simple chords was very great, whilst the table actually jumped up and down keeping accurate time with the music. This became so violent that it might have been heard all over the house. It ceased suddenly and in a minute recommenced.

Miss Douglas said: "Dear spirits, how pleased you would have been had you lived to witness the progress Spiritualism is now making." Immediately a message was given in reply:—

"We are not dead!"

Mr. Home brought the accordion back to under the table, when it sounded notes again. There was a sound as of a man's bass voice¹ accompanying it. On mentioning this, one note, "No," was given, and the musical bar repeated several times slowly, till we found out that it was caused by a peculiar discord played on a bass note. On finding this out the instrument burst out with its usual jubilant bar.

Miss Douglas saying that she felt touched, I asked if we might get some direct writing. Two raps were given. I asked Miss Douglas to put the marked sheets of paper and pencil under the table by her feet, and requested that something might be written on it.

Three raps.

The power now seemed to go to the lath; it was lifted up several times at alternate ends to a height of several inches and then floated quite above the table.

The planchette moved irregularly along the paper, making a mark with the pencil.

Some of those who were present said they saw a luminous hand touching the paper. I saw the paper raised up at the side away from Mr. Home.

I felt touched strongly on the knee by something feeling like fingers. On

¹ See incident on p. 116.

putting my hand down a sheet of paper was put into it. I said, "Is anything written on it?"

"Yes."

It being too dark to see what was written, I asked that it might be told me by raps, and on repeating the alphabet I got the following:—

"Rctojdourdanie."

On striking a light the following was seen neatly written:—

R. C. to J. D.

Our Daniel.

Miss Douglas said the R. C. was Robert Chambers, whilst J. D. were the initials of her own name.

As the paper was a sheet I had marked and it was free from any writing when put under the table, whilst no one had moved from the table in the meantime, this was as striking a manifestation as I had ever seen.

Mrs. Home, who for some time past had said a hand was holding her hand, now said that the hand was under her dress. Each of us in turn went round and felt it. To me it felt very small and I could not distinguish any form which I could be certain was a hand. Mrs. Wm. Crookes, who went next, said it was at first very small but it seemed to grow large as she felt it until it was exactly like a large hand, the knuckles and fingers being very distinct. The hand remained with Mrs. Home for half an hour at least. On asking for the name of the hand which had held hers, the name

"Alexandrine"

was spelt out.

A sound like the snapping of fingers was heard. On speaking of this it was repeated at our request in different parts of the room.

The wooden lath which was lying just in front of me appeared to move slightly, whereupon I leaned forward and watched it intently. It rose up about half an inch, then sank down, and afterwards turned up on one end till it was upright, and then descended on the other side till it touched one of Mr. Home's hands. One end remained all the time on the table whilst the other end described a semicircle. The movement was very deliberate. The lath then moved away from Mr. Home's hands and laid itself across the planchette. Both it and the planchette moved slightly. The lath then moved off and stood quite upright on the table. It then slowly descended.

The accordion, which had been for some time quiet under the table, now was heard to sound and move about. Presently Miss Douglas felt it come to her and push against her knees.

The window curtains at the end of the room furthest from the door, and seven feet from where Mr. Home was sitting, were seen to move about. They opened in the centre for a space of about a foot, exactly as if a man had divided them with his hands. Mr. Home said he saw a dark form standing in front of the window moving the curtains, and Mrs. Wm. Crookes and Mr. C. Gimmingham also said they saw a shadow of a form. The form was then seen to go behind one curtain and move it outwards into the room for a distance of about 18 inches. This was repeated several times.

The wooden lath now rose from the table and rested one end on my knuckles, the other end being on the table. It then rose up and tapped me

several times. Questions which I put were answered "Yes" or "No," in this manner. I said, "Do you know the Morse alphabet?" "Yes." "Could you give me a message by it?" "Yes." As soon as this was rapped out the lath commenced rapping my knuckles in long and short taps, in a manner exactly resembling a "Morse" message. My knowledge of the code and of reading by sound is not sufficient to enable me to say positively that it was a message; but it sounded exactly like one; the long and short taps and the pauses were exactly similar, and Mr. C. Gimingham, who has had practice with the Morse code, feels almost certain that it was so.

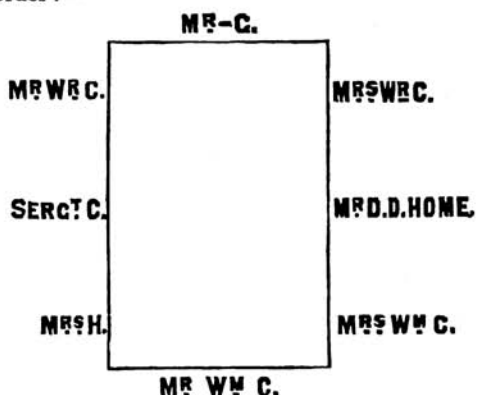
Afterwards at my request the Morse alphabet was given distinctly by taps on the table. During this time Mrs. Wm. Crookes was standing on the other side of the table by Mrs. Home. Her chair between me and Mr. Home was empty and I could see Mr. Home's hands resting quietly on the table in front of him.

Mr. Home went into a trance, and addressed several of us in turn.

The séance ended at about 11.30 p.m.

(X.) TUESDAY, APRIL 16th, 1872.—Sitting at 20, Mornington-road. From 8.50 p.m.

Present:—Mr. D. D. Home (medium), Mr. Serjt. Cox, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Crookes, Mr. and Mrs. Wr. Crookes, Mrs. Humphrey, Mr. F. G., in the following order:—



On the table were flowers, an accordion, a lath, a bell, paper, and pencils.

Phenomena.—Creaks were heard, followed by a trembling of the table and chairs.

The table gently moved from Mr. Wr. Crookes to Mr. Home.

Raps were heard on different parts of the table.

Mr. F. G. was under the table when the movements were going on. There was vibration and knocks on the floor. The table moved six inches from Mr. F. G. to me; and there was a strong trembling of the table.

A shower of loud ticks by Mr. F. G. was heard, and thumps as of a foot on the floor.

The table trembled twice at Mr. F. G.'s request; then twice and a third time after an interval. This was done several times.

The table became light and heavy. Mr. F. G. tested it, and there was no mistake.

There were strong movements of the table when Mr. F. G. was under it. Mr. Home's chair moved back six inches.

The accordion was taken by Mr. Home in the usual manner and sounded. Mr. F. G. looked under, whilst it was expanding and contracting.

We were speaking of the music, when a message was given :—

“It comes from the heart. A hymn of praise.”

After which beautiful sacred music was played.

The bell was taken from Mrs. Wm. Crookes, and tinkled under the table for some time. It was thrown down close to Mr. F. G., who took it.

The accordion laid down under the table by Serjt. Cox and played a few notes, when all hands were on the table. Mrs. Wm. Crookes put her feet on Mr. Home's. A big hand pushed Mrs. Wm. Crookes's feet away. The accordion played and then pushed into Mr. F. G.'s hand. Mr. F. G. held it for some time, but there was no sound, and it was given to Mr. Home.

Mrs. Wm. Crookes's dress was pulled round, while Mr. F. G. was looking on. Mrs. Wm. Crookes put her feet touching Mr. F. G.'s.

The accordion played in Mr. Home's hands. He said he felt a touch, on which there were five raps, and a message came :—

“We did.”

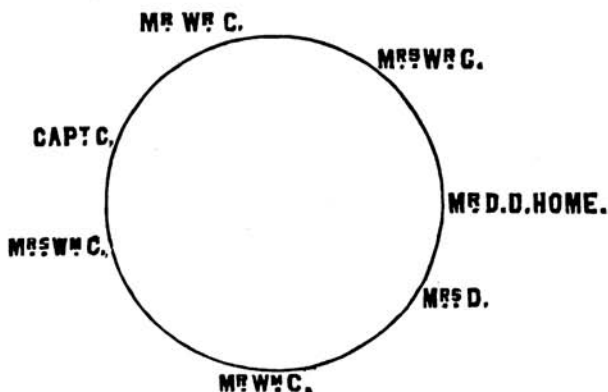
“The Last Rose of Summer” was played exquisitely. Mr. Home then put the accordion down. There was quietness for a minute, followed by movements of the table, and a message was given :—

“We have no more power.”

(XL) SUNDAY, APRIL 21st, 1872.—Sitting at 24, Motcombe-street. The residence of my brother, Mr. Walter Crookes.

Present :—Mr. D. D. Home (medium), Mrs. Douglas, Capt. C., Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Crookes, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Crookes.

In the drawing-room, round the centre table.



Phenomena :—Strong vibrations of the cabinet behind Mr. Home : con-

tinuous raps on the table : very strong vibrations of the cabinet. Then a long silence. Mr. Home went to the piano.

On his return the vibrations recommenced ; then there were powerful raps on the table in front of me.

There were thumps on the table and then on the floor.

I was touched on the knee.

I was touched again on the knee. The table then rattled about so violently that I could not write.

Mr. Home took the accordion in the usual manner. It played a tune.

Mrs. Douglas's handkerchief was taken from her lap by a hand visible to her and Mr. Home, the accordion playing beautifully all the time. A message was given :—

“ Try less light.”

The handkerchief moved about along the floor, visible to all.

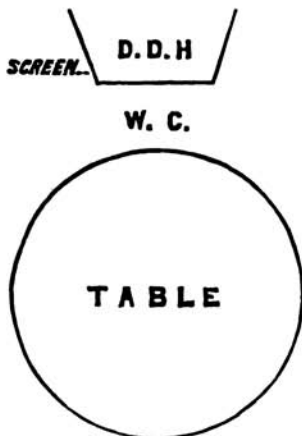
Mr. Home nearly disappeared under the table in a curious attitude, then he was (still in his chair) wheeled out from under the table still in the same attitude, his feet out in front off the ground. He was then sitting almost horizontally, his shoulders resting on his chair.

He asked Mrs. Wr. Crookes to remove the chair from under him as it was not supporting him. He was then seen to be sitting in the air supported by nothing visible.

Then Mr. Home rested the extreme top of his head on a chair, and his feet on the sofa. He said he felt supported in the middle very comfortably. The chair then moved away of its own accord, and Mr. Home rested flat over the floor behind Mrs. Wr. Crookes.

A stool then moved up from behind Mrs. Wr. Crookes to between her and Mr. Home.

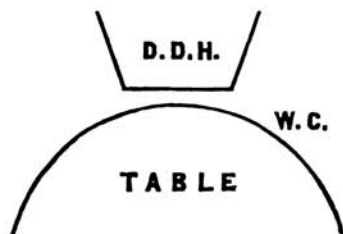
Mr. Home then got up, and after walking about the room went to a large glass screen and brought it close up to me, and opened it out thus :—



Mr. Home then put his hands on the screen, and we had raps on the glass. (The gas was turned brightly up during these experiments.)

Then Mr. Home put his hand on one leaf of the screen, and I put my hand where I chose on the other leaf. Raps came from under my hand.

The screen was then put thus :—



Mr. Home stood behind the screen and had the gas light shining full on him. He rested his two hands lightly on the top of the centre leaf of the screen. In this position we had the table cloth moved, raps on the table in front of the screen, and raps on the glass leaves (either one at request). A lady's dress was pulled, and the chairs were shaken.

The screen was then folded up and laid horizontally on two chairs, so as to form a glass table. Mr. Home sat at one side and I sat at the other side, by ourselves. The light was very good, and the whole of his legs and feet were easily seen through the screen.

Many experiments were then tried on this glass table. Raps came from it at my request where I desired. It was vibrated ; and once raps came when Mr. Home was not touching it.

The light was then lowered and the screen put aside.

The cushion from the sofa floated off it and came between Mr. Home and Mrs. Wr. Crookes.

Mr. Home took the accordion, and it played "Auld Lang Syne."

Someone was seen standing behind Mrs. Wm. Crookes.

Mrs. Wm. Crookes had severe pain in her head. Mr. Home came behind her and mesmerised her, and the pain went.

A message came to Mrs. Wr. Crookes.

Nothing more took place after this.