

NEW YORK TIMES, April 19, 1908

IN A SÉANCE WITH EUSAPIA PALADINO

Interesting Demonstration given in Paris by the Celebrated Italian Medium.

Journalist Tells Story

Famous "Luminous Hand" is introduced and

One of the Watchers Has His Hair Vigorously Pulled.

Special Correspondence THE NEW YORK TIMES

Paris, April 11. - Remarkable reports continue to be published in the French press concerning the eminent Italian medium Eusapia Paladino. Scientists, journalists, and other professional investigators of psychic phenomena have all witnessed remarkable demonstrations by her which greatly puzzle them.

Anybody who has seen Mme. Paladino would be loath to classify her as a "fake." She is a woman of more than ordinary intelligence, submits readily to tests and apparently has such genuine confidence in her own powers that it is hard to suspect her of double-dealing. She is a small woman physically, but vigorous and vivacious. Her eyes are dark and lively, her forehead high and strong, her chin shows determination. Her dark hair is turning gray, and over her forehead, like a plume, is a single wisp which is snowy white. She is fifty-three years old.

M. Frederic Boutet, a prominent French journalist, tells a graphic story of one of the most recent séances at which Eusapia showed her powers. The séance took place at the house of a friend in a room which had been specially prepared for the demonstration. It was a small, square room, hung with velvet. One of the corners had been cut off by a large black curtain, hung with rings, on an ordinary curtain pole. In this small triangular space, back of the curtain, was a small centre table on which was placed a tambourine. Beside this was a chair on which were a mandolin and an accordeon. In front of the opening, which split the centre of the curtain, was the inevitable table. This was a small kitchen table of ordinary pine. The curtain was in contact with one of its ends.

"Eusapia, with her bent index finger, strikes a few blows on the wood of the table. Like a distant echo comes a knocking in response. The experiment is renewed by several of those who form part of the chain. After that, at the request of the medium, I cut off the electricity. The room is plunged into a reddish twilight favorable to supernatural visitations. The table is again moving. It taps with one of its legs on the floor. One, two, three, four, five.

“That means that there is still too much light, someone explains.” “No, it is merely to attract attention,” murmurs a lady sitting near me.

“John is coming,” Says another person present.

“John” is the unknown who is Eusapia's familiar spirit.

“We wait. John doesn't come. However, behind the black curtain into the folds of which the groaning medium retreats further and further, we hear the centre table fall over. The tambourine rolls in our direction. The curtain swells out. The mandolin tinkles as though its strings were touched by a swift hand. “I feel a blow!” Suddenly declares the person seated at Eusapia's left. “Control,” says she. We are touching her hands and her knees.

Behind the curtain the centre table, which has been upset, advances and retreats with a shuffling sound. I lean forward to look at it. It stops. The other table is moving.

“The luminous hand!” Cries a voice. I draw back and gaze with all my eyes. On Eusapia's head, which is almost hidden in the folds of the black cloth, I see a vaguely luminous spot, as though the white wisp of her hair had become phosphorescent. I distinguish the spot, but it in no ways suggests a hand. Moreover, it has already disappeared.

The curtain waves forward into the room. A young woman sitting near it utters a slight cry. A hand concealed by the cloth has seized her by the arm. The curtain slips along violently on the rings and envelops the medium. The chair behind the curtain is raised by some sort of process, passes through the opening, brushes over Eusapia, and rests on the table. It is almost absolutely dark, and Eusapia, buried in the dark and shadowy folds, is no longer visible.

Placed around the table were six chairs. In another corner of the room, opposite that cut off by the black curtain, was a lamp behind a red curtain. When the séance began at 9 o'clock, Eusapia took a seat with her back to the black curtain. Behind her was the mysterious triangular space. In front of her was the table between the legs of which she passed her knees. The folds of the curtain fell about her shoulders. Besides Eusapia there were thirteen persons in the room, only three or four of whom were confessed spiritualists.

Two expert investigators seated themselves on either side of Eusapia. Each of them held one of her hands and she placed her feet on theirs. Five other persons completed the chain. The other members of the party were allowed to remain in the room and look on.

After an interval of about fifteen minutes Eusapia uttered a slight groan and suddenly requested that a cane chair be given her instead of the upholstered chair upon which she was sitting. Silk is unfavorable to spirits. The cane chair was got from the kitchen and the chain was reformed. The room was still flooded with light, all of the electric lights being turned on. Eusapia requested that half of the lights be turned out. The request was granted.

M. Boutet, who was one of the experts holding the hands of the medium, continues his account of what happened as follows:

The medium groans again and twists on her chair. Her hair seems to rise on end. The table gives signs of movement. It shivers, creaks, and then rises into the air. "Control," says Eusapia. 'Nous controlons' we respond together, which signifies that our hands are holding hers and that our knees are touching hers. The table continues to rise. The two legs which are furthest off from Eusapia leave the ground, fall back again, rise another time, and again fall back. At the same time the curtain swells out slightly. The table rises again. This time all four legs quite the ground and fall back to the floor with a noise. Eusapia's hands rest lightly on the table which she seems to draw toward her. Then Eusapia withdraws her hands from the table altogether so that she is no longer touching it except with the folds of her dress, and the table raises itself following the movement indicated by the hands. This experiments suggest the movement of iron following a magnet. This continues during ten seconds.

"Control," says the medium. 'Nous controlons,' respond her neighbors with, it seems to me, a little less assurance.

"This is the end of the first part of the séance. The electricity is again turned on. Eusapia groans and covers her eyes. Her hair is in disorder and she seems worn out. She complains of contrary currents which embarrass the experiments. Then, in the fullness of light, the medium, without forming a chain, again holds her hands above the table. The table rises steadily from the floor until its four legs are in the air. I press upon it, and it requires a considerable effort to bring it to earth again. As soon as I removed my hand it rises again. This time I lie down flat on the floor under it. One of my friends does the same. The table still rises. We seize upon its legs and it suddenly falls back to the floor, one of its feet coming dangerously near the nose of my friend. We both get up confessing, both of us, that it is impossible to see or even to understand the possibility of a trick of any sort.

At 10:30 the chain is reformed. This time I am seated at Eusapia's left - the preferred place, as being most exposed to manifestations of the spirit. Eusapia puts her foot on my foot and gives me her hand, but she does not wish me to hold it. She wishes to hold me, and as soon as the light is put out her hand is

agitated with continual movement. Her fingers 'play the piano' on my hands. She draws my arm across her knees and does as much for her neighbor's on the right. Table and curtain again begin to give signs of activity. The mandolin rolls behind the curtain, which again envelops Eusapia.

"Control," she says. Remembering that the spirit is English, I address him a few words in this language. He rewards me by tugging at the skirts of my coat. Eusapia's hands are placed on her knees one against the other, and in each of her hands are the hands of the controllers whom the spirit now envelops also in the folds of the curtain. Suddenly through the curtain a hand seizes me by the shoulder. I attempt to seize it with my left hand, the right being engaged in the control.

The hand releases me immediately. For a space nothing happens. Eusapia groans, her hands are unceasingly agitated. The spirit vigorously pulls my hair. "Look out," says my self-controller in Latin. And he adds: "Look out the she doesn't hold both of our hands in one of hers."

The spirit is angry doubtless, for he gives my neighbor a blow in the middle of the back. The table is still moving but the séance is almost over. Eusapia groans. She seems exhausted. The table gives a few more movements. The electric light is again turned on. All is over."