

about the portrait of a sitter, appear, as a rule, draped and filmy and fuzzy and indistinct. 'The very indistinctness of the "spook's" features makes it, of course,' said we, 'difficult for the sitter to quarrel with the medium's positive statement that the "spirit-form" is that of some near and dear one "not lost but gone before."' Where outlines are so vague there is naturally ample room for the sly and practised suggestion of the medium, and for the imagination of his believing client to work a sufficient resemblance out of a comparative blur. Brief references to a few noted cases in point will best serve to illustrate the manner in which the simplicity of the sitter is made to eke out the cunning of the charlatan.

Here we may remark that the first 'spirit photograph' that made history was produced quite innocently. It was in the old days of photography, when the portrait and landscape artist used sheets of plain glass and made one of the surfaces of each of them sensitive to the action of light by pouring over it wet collodion and 'humoring' the liquid until it formed a thin film which dried fairly rapidly. When one of these plates had served its purpose or had been spoiled, the film was removed, 'floated' again with collodion, and used for a fresh sitter. An American photographer had taken a sitter in the customary way with one of these collodion plates. From the negative he took a print, and on the print, to his surprise, he saw the faint figure of 'a lady in white' hovering over the sitter. An examination of the negative showed the second figure there in very faint and foggy outline. It turned out that the glass had previously borne the negative image of a lady sitter dressed in white, and that in cleaning this off some very small inner pellicule or 'skin' of the film had remained, or a chemical action set up between the image and the glass, turning the latter yellow in parts. The result was a faint image of the lady sitter. The yellow color was only dimly visible in the negative, but, being a non-actinic color, it gave a clear image upon the print. This sort of accident was not uncommon in the old wet-plate photography. But it gave to enterprising mediums who understood photography a cue to second exposures of the plates, which they soon exploited for the purpose of eking out their 'manifestations' and attracting to their fobs the coins of the unwary. In October, 1862, a Boston photographer named Mumler took a portrait of Dr. Gardner, of the same city. The Doctor announced that on the same plate and print there appeared that faint likeness of a cousin of his who had passed out through one of the many doors of death twelve years before. Spiritists and others flocked to Mumler's studio. He did good business in 'spirit photographs'—some of his clients 'recognising' the draped and foggy looking 'spooks' as likenesses of friends who had gone before. In February, 1863, however, Dr. Gardner discovered that in at least two of the 'spirit photographs' a specific living person had posed as the 'spook'—a second exposure being made after the manner described in our last issue. Many continued to believe in him, chiefly because they failed to detect trickery in his methods. But the exposure by Dr. Gardner caused, for a time, a slump in Mumler's 'spirit photographs.' He seems to have disappeared from the scene after an abortive prosecution in New York in 1869.

'Spirit photography' seems to have begun in England in 1872. The *dramatis personee* were the medium Mrs. Guppy, her husband, some other medium, and a photographer named Hudson. 'Spirit forms' were, of course, duly produced. And—again of course—they were wrapped in plentiful white drapery, and their features made so blurred and indistinct as to be only partly discernible or quite unrecognisable. Nevertheless, they were, as usual, 'recognised' by many persons as the likenesses of friends who had passed away. 'Hudson's studio,' says Podmore (vol. ii., p. 118), 'was at once besieged by eager spiritualists, and numerous testimonies to the genuineness of the results appeared in the spiritualist papers. . . . But very shortly the bright prospect clouded. Mr. Enmore Jones, a well-known spiritualist, who had in his first enthusiasm described the instant recognition by his son of an imperfectly discernible profile as that of a dead sister, wrote later to say that he had found grounds for suspicion, and that, on further inspection, he was satisfied that the likeness was not of his daughter or of any member of his family. And worse was to follow. The editor of the *Spiritualist*, W. H. Harrison, himself a practical photographer, another photographer, Beattie, and other persons soon ascertained that fraud had been used. It was observed, on a close scrutiny of the pictures, that in some cases the medium had dressed up to play the part of ghost. In many there were signs of double exposure, the pattern of the carpet and other parts of the background showing through the legs of the sitter, as well as through those of the ghost. Inspection of the actual negatives again revealed that in

some cases they had been tampered with in the attempt to erase these tell-tale marks.' An effort was made by spiritists and the spiritistic magazines to discount the evidences of fraud by an appeal to the cases in which the 'spirit figures' were recognised by the sitters as the likenesses of their deceased friends. But it is hardly necessary to point out the doubtful value, or (as the case may be) the utter worthlessness, of many such recognitions. The case of Enmore Jones has already been mentioned. Many other curious cases of 'recognition' might be mentioned. Take, for instance, that of Mrs. Fitzgerald, a noted spiritist, who 'recognised,' 'unmistakably,' a veiled and draped 'spirit photograph' by the contour alone (*Spiritual Magazine*, 1872, p. 321). Or take some of the cases of 'recognition' alleged by the medium Stainton Moses: A 'spirit' face superimposed upon another face, so that 'three eyes only were required to form two perfect faces'; a three-quarter face 'spook' with chin, forehead, and sides of face concealed by drapery; a closely veiled figure (apparently that of a female)—this is 'recognised' by its glove!—and the faint form of 'a baby ephaloed in copious white drapery.' The baby is recognised by its features. But the gilding is knocked off the 'recognition' of the fluffy 'spirit' baby when we learn that it had died fifty years before, at the age of seven months. At that early period of infantile existence, most babies are (to the mere man, at least) quite remarkably alike. And even a mother's heart might well be pardoned if, after half a century, her memory of a cherished baby form had grown 'dim.'

The value of the 'recognition' of the likenesses of deceased friends in 'spirit photographs' may be still further illustrated by the historic case of the photographic medium, Buguet. Buguet was a Parisian photographer. He began to shed the light of his presence on London in the pleasant summer time of 1874, and produced 'spirit photographs' of greater clearness and higher artistic quality than Hudson, Parkes, Duguid, or others of his time. And a far higher percentage of likenesses was discovered by his clients than was the case with the other charlatans of the camera. In the *Spiritualist* of June, 1874, Mr. W. H. Harrison (already referred to above as editor and practical photographer) states that he was present at one of the sittings and discovered no trick or ruse or stratagem. Buguet, however, would not permit Harrison to operate; and the only guarantee given him by which to identify the glass plate was a bit of glass—*broken off by Buguet!* This was, of course, a circumstance of the utmost suspicion. It allowed Buguet the amplest scope for substituting 'faked' for honest plates, and for a score of the varied forms of trickery and imposture described in our last issue. The noted medium, Stainton Moses, endorsed the reality of Buguet's 'spooks' in the journal *Human Nature* (conducted by Moses).

That was in the merry month of May, 1875. Buguet's purse, like the fat boy's figure, was 'wisibly swellin'' with the shekels which he won, by his 'spirit photographs,' from the hands of the titled and untitled sitters that swarmed into his studio. But, for him, the end was near. A month after he had received the blessing of Stainton Moses' high approval, Buguet was arrested and charged by the Government of the Third French Republic with the fraudulent making and vending of 'spirit photographs.' A verbatim report of this historical spiritistic trial appeared in a book published in the same year (1875) by Leymarie, of Paris, and entitled *Procès des Spiritistes*. We give the account as it is condensed by a well-known writer on spiritistic themes: 'When put on his trial Buguet made a full confession. The whole of his "spirit" photographs were, he stated, produced by means of double exposure [the details of this imposture were described in our last issue]. In the first instance, he employed his assistants—of whom there were three or four—to play the part of ghost. Later, as his business grew, and he feared that the constant repetition of the same features might arouse suspicion, he constructed a headless doll or lay figure, which, variously draped, served for the body of the ghost. The head was commonly chosen to suit the expectations, where these were expressed, or apparent circumstances of the sitter; information on these points being frequently extracted by the assistants, who received the visitors on their entrance. The lay figure and a large stock of heads were seized by the police at the studio.'

Our author continues with a record of a peculiar phase of this illusion, to which we direct the particular attention of the reader. 'The peculiar interest of the trial did not consist, however, in these paltry revelations; for, after all, Buguet did little to improve on the methods inaugurated by his predecessors. It is the effect produced on his dupes by Buguet's confession, and the display of his trick apparatus, which is really worthy of attention. Wit-