

# The Marvel that Amazed the Sorbonne Scientists

A "Flesh and Blood" Woman, Eight Inches Tall, Floated in the Air and Turned Somersaults While Eminent Scholars Gaped at an Astounding "Seance"—Conan Doyle Overshadowed

"It modeled itself very rapidly and we could recognize, admirably formed, the contour of a woman who seemed to be enveloped in a sort of filmy gauze. The clear color increased from right to left, and the substance transformed gradually into a little, undraped woman of impeccable form and beauty."



(Special Correspondence.)

PARIS, Saturday.

WHILE international attention has been attracted to the extraordinary announcements made by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle of results obtained in his seances, results which reached an amazing climax with the materialization of a face believed to be that of his dead child lingering near his own, there have been in progress before the professors of the Sorbonne, the great national university of France, experiments and demonstrations in psychic science which have so far overshadowed those of Sir Arthur that the report of them, here made public for the first time, may well be expected to startle the entire world with a new sensation.

Heretofore we have heard and read of strange ethereal materializations of vapory substances vaguely resembling human faces or parts of human anatomy. These seance results have been obtained, it has been reported, by many, but principally by Sir Arthur. Photographs have been taken of these materializations, and those who observed the progress in psychic science with at least a curious interest because of its principal devotee, an international figure made familiar by his writings, have been somewhat intrigued by these strange happenings.

Now, however, it is revealed that for many months experiments have been progressing under the auspices not of a single individual, creditable and interesting because of his past literary performances, but before a grave, unemotional committee of scientists attached to the Sorbonne—a committee of men who may be considered as being almost the final appeal of the skeptical and the curious—which have brought results almost unbelievable even to those who have been impressed by the materialization of the face at Conan Doyle's seances.

Not only a face, but a human form, solid, flesh composed, breathing, moving and responsive to the command of a scientific witness, has been materialized in empty space—with the Sorbonne professors looking intently on. And this has been achieved not in the dark secrecy of an unlit room, behind the protection of a cube shaped wooden and heavily draped cabinet. It has been accomplished, according to the official report disclosed later on this page, in a room fully lighted; in the presence of the entire committee of Sorbonne professors and other scientists; through the agency of a sleeping medium in full view of the spectators, some of whom tightly held her hands while others stood close to observe even her respiration.

The human form thus materialized, the official process verbal reveals, was that of a woman, perfectly formed, animate of legs, hands and torso, with long, luxu-

riant hair—although the body, which appeared completely undraped, was but about eight inches tall.

As if to complete the sensation these Sorbonne experiments promise, it is casually included in the report, signed by five of the scientists who were present, that—

"It remained in my hands ten seconds and we were able to confirm the perfection of its members. It possessed weight; it felt dry and soft—"

And further on—"I told it to repeat a movement which would show that it was alive. It turned a complete somersault."

The details of this extraordinary climax to a psychic demonstration which threatens further revelations answering at once those strange questions which students are asking throughout the world when hitherto reported progress is considered, are given below in the official report with its notable signatures—a report just procured by the representative of THE NEW YORK HERALD. It may be well here to consider the identity of the woman who is the principal figure in these experiments and weird manifestations which the Sorbonne is examining.

She is Mme. Juliette Bisson, who occupies a studio in the Passy quarter of Paris, where for several years she has indulged in quiet but persistent psychic research. Mme. Bisson is a sculptress of considerable note, and numbers among her friends and intimates many of the foremost figures in the intellectual life of France. She has never associated her investigations with any financial considerations whatever, and such results of her endeavors as have been made public have been announced not by her, but by well established organizations of scholars and students.

Mme. Bisson is essentially a student. She announced some time ago that she was convinced that human life would some day be thoroughly explained to mortals. She declared her belief that intellectual progress had reached such a stage that a full understanding of the foundation of life, its inspiration and its aftermath, were required by the human race if it were to continue the development which had reached such heights as to reach virtually an impasse without further light upon the mystery of human existence.

Study and experimentation by Mme. Bisson have continued through eighteen years. Throughout this period she has

been assisted by the same psychic medium, who has progressed with her through the various stages of her investigations and accomplishments. Every experiment conducted by her has been held under the strictest auspices, with all human forces under the most rigid control of spectators whose names and authority always have been highly honored throughout the scientific world.

Research organizations of England, France, Switzerland, Germany, and even the United States have looked eagerly forward to such reports as have been made from time to time from Mme. Bisson's studio, and her progress has been considered the progress of all psychic research. Her announcement made to a limited circle of scientists last year that she had succeeded in producing a living form from the flesh of her medium, a living form that breathed, moved at her command and displayed all the characteristics of a complete human body, with even human intelligence, was considered so astounding and so worthy of the attention of even the Republic itself that upon the authority of no less a figure than Camille Flammarion, the great astronomer and academician, it was at once reported to the Sorbonne.

To say merely that the professors of the Sorbonne gaped may be regarded as putting it mildly. Such an announcement from Mme. Bisson, supported as it was by Prof. Flammarion, who had undertaken to be convinced by a demonstration in his own laboratories, demanded immediate action upon the part of the University. Arrangements were made at once for the materializations to be repeated and further experiments continued in the presence of a committee of the Sorbonne and in the Sorbonne laboratories. News of this development was withheld from the public and only now is it disclosed.

For several years it has been generally known Mme. Bisson has had remarkable success with the minor forces of materializations. Her experiments always have been conducted in the presence either of

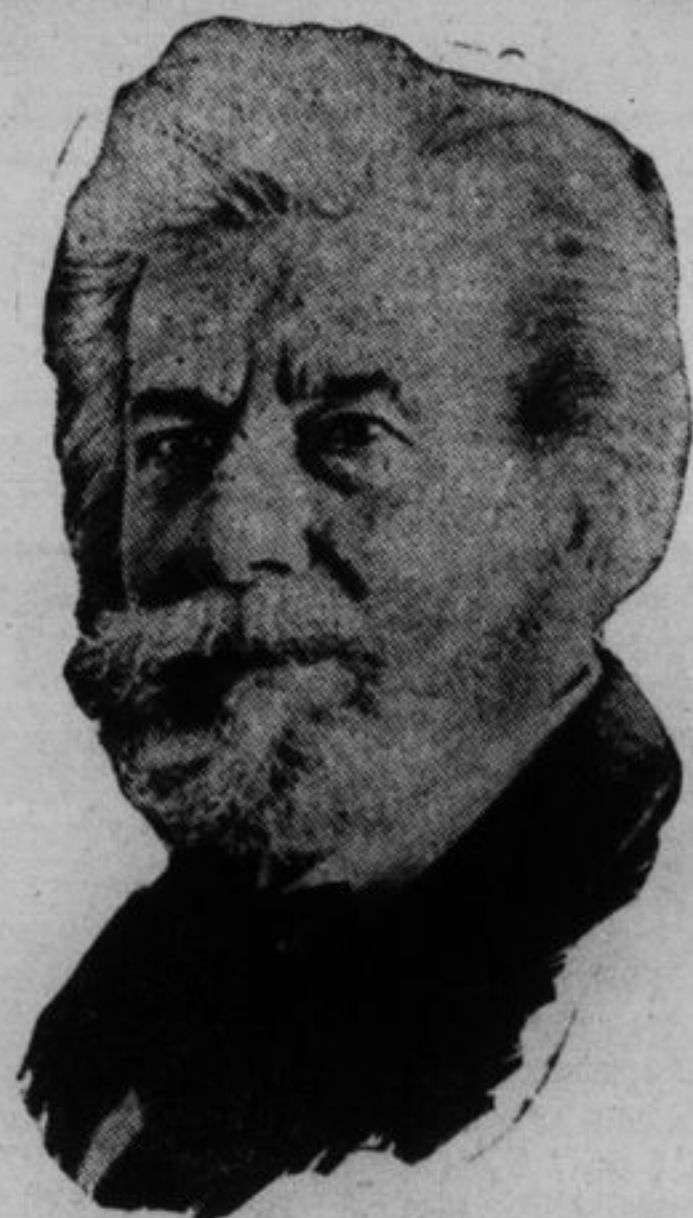
Prof. Flammarion or some one of equal standing in the world of science. It has been her custom to have her medium held by either hand, tightly, so that all spectators might be assured of wholly involuntary action.

At first, following in the footsteps of other investigators, such as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Sir Oliver Lodge and Stead, these experiments, generally called "seances," were held in the dark, with the customary wooden cabinet almost wholly enclosing the medium. As her research deepened, however, Mme. Bisson and those who were watching the results obtained were not satisfied with manifestations which seemed to require darkened rooms. "There can be no belief, no satisfaction, as long as the element of mystery and secrecy is contributed to the process of materializations by an envelope of darkness," Mme. Bisson declared.

Gradually the lighting in her studio was brightened until, since the war, all of her experiments have been conducted in the full light of the sun that streams in through her studio windows. It has been in this full light that photographs repeatedly have been made of the faces and forms which have emanated from the flesh of her sleeping medium. All these photographs, some of which are reproduced on these pages, have been made with spectators sitting by—with the hands of the medium clasped tightly, Mme. Bisson has failed to recognize in any of her materialized forms any particular person of her past acquaintance—which is contrary to the reports made by others engaged in psychic research. Virtually all of the latter have claimed that the faces they reported as materialized at their experiments were those of individuals closely associated with their own lives. Doyle recognized his son. Stead recognized a child he had known. Lodge recognized his "personalities from the spirit world."

Mme. Bisson attributes her startling recent successes to the complete psychic harmony, as she describes the condition existing between sincere investigators

The amazing scene at the Sorbonne as conceived by the artist. Mme. Carriere, obeying the commands of the distinguished Mme. Bisson, materializing the complete flesh and blood body of a miniature woman, who evidenced complete human faculties, moving about at the command of Mme. Bisson and, indeed, turning a complete somersault in the hand of one of the Sorbonne scientists who witnessed the remarkable event. Those present at this manifestation included some of the most famous scientists of France, whose names later were signed to the official process verbal describing the occurrences—this report is disclosed on the following page. A retouched photograph of this scene also is presented on that page.



Camille Flammarion, the distinguished French scientist, who has witnessed Mme. Bisson's materializations.

since the war. "The tragedy of the war, its experiments and its conduciveness to deep thought," she says, "has given those who are interested in psychic research complete conviction. They no longer are skeptic. Also they no longer are led astray by false explanations. They admit there is no explanation as yet of the strange results obtained. They have persuaded themselves to postpone explanation of the problem they seek to solve until after the solution is arrived at. They have learned to ignore criticism and disbelief. With such a mental equilibrium they are approaching their investigations in full harmony with themselves and the mystery they seek to penetrate."

The forms which Mme. Bisson materializes all are composed of some definite substance—so definite, it is declared, that they are susceptible to examination under high powered microscopes and to complete scientific analysis. The purpose of this report, made by Flammarion and others who have been her witnesses, may best be imagined when one considers that the materializations of all other experimenters have been wholly visionary and of no substance responding to the touch. Her materialized forms float at some distance from the body of her medium, it is affirmed by her witnesses, leaving traces of moisture when they chance to touch the garment of a spectator. This moisture, when analyzed, seems to be composed of cells known to the physiologists as epithelial.

Amazed by the rumors in academic circles of Mme. Bisson's remarkable achievement, the representative of THE NEW YORK HERALD succeeded in gaining admission to the studio where one of the materializations occurred. He found a charming, intelligent woman, versed in other sciences than those of the mind, supremely confident that the world would some day carry her discoveries to a vastly more important conclusion than she would be able to reach in her lifetime.

"But do not give the impression that I try to explain the results which have

happened to fall within the scope of my observance; that is for the future," she said at once.

"But something has happened which the world must think about. A form has come from the being of a sleeping medium. It has remained in this world for only a brief space and has returned to the mysterious source from which it originated. Some time while it was with us the seekers after the verities of existence may add to the knowledge of scores of centuries in which research has been balked by dogma and intestine quarrels."

Mme. Bisson uses a cubic cabinet, a suspended sack, only partially enveloping the sleeping medium, who is attired in ordinary theatrical tights, with her arms thrust through two apertures in the sack.

Speaking of her experiments in daylight, Mme. Bisson said:

"I admit that I hesitated because I feared for the safety of the medium. I feared too strong a reaction, too great a fatigue for her, for always I have believed that it is the medium and not the apparition that suffers from too much light. We decided to carry on the experiments with a long aperture in the side of the sack through which the various materializations might be watched more accurately and the health of Eva Carriere, my medium, controlled, thanks to the greater respiratory advantages.

"This experience gave unexpected results. The medium once asleep commenced to complain, declaring that she did not wish to continue, that she was being hurt—wounded—but I saw that she was in no danger and insisted that the research continue. Since then we have worked steadily in the broad daylight of my atelier and have seen the usual apparitions without difficulty.

"In fact the apparitions seem to delight in presenting themselves in the broad light of day. They remain visible longer, they come into our hands and

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