

a trade. He availed himself of the opportunity that thus offered itself; and it was with the few pounds that he had saved whilst working at his trade that he, with his brother Edward, opened a small shop in the Strand for the sale of second-hand books. But the brothers were not long content with being only booksellers, they soon began to print and publish books on their own account. The few books they published to start with, for some private reason, bore the name of William Tinsley only on the title-pages.

The brothers remained a short time only in the Strand before they removed to the premises in Catherine-street, where the publishing business of the firm of Tinsley Brothers has ever since been carried on.

From a farmer's boy, with two shillings or half a crown a-week for wages, to the position Mr. William Tinsley now holds as a publisher, is no ordinary leap in life, especially when it must be taken into consideration that he had only the advantage in early life of the most rudimentary education. Mr. Tinsley is now, we believe, sometimes a contributor upon dramatic and social subjects to the pages of his own magazine. The story of William Tinsley's life, if told at length, would no doubt only add one more to the thousands of proofs of what perseverance and pluck can accomplish, if put to the test; and it is worthy of some speculation as to what eminence in life men such as those of whom Mr. William Tinsley is a type would have attained if they had had the advantages of a good education to start with, instead of being obliged to educate themselves during the time they are making their way in the world.

A glance at Tinsley Brothers' list of works in this week's *Athenæum* will, we think, convince any one with the slightest knowledge of modern English literature, that Mr. William Tinsley's judgment is not much at fault in his selection of authors. In this list may be seen the names of Captain Burton (the celebrated African traveller), the veteran Planché, G. A. Sala, and other writers of works of standard excellence in various departments of literature.

Among the works of fiction in his list may be found the names of Anthony Trollope, George Macdonald, Mrs. Oliphant, Henry Kingsley, Edmund Yates, Mrs. Henry Wood,

Miss Rhoda Broughton, Justin M'Carthy, B. L. Farjeon, and many other favourites with the novel-reading public.

THE PAINTED CHAMBER.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART II.

BY JOHN C. DENT.

ON the morrow, Mrs. Rennelson called at my office as per appointment. Her sister again accompanied her; but the office was apparently free from "influences," for she was perfectly quiet and collected during the interview.

When Mrs. Rennelson had brought her statement to a close, and I had given her such advice as the nature of the case rendered proper, she informed me that her sister desired a private interview with me. I bowed, and Mrs. Rennelson took her leave.

Mrs. Davidson at once entered upon her purpose.

"Of course you don't believe in spiritualism, Mr. Rushworth?"

I didn't wish to hurt her feelings; and, for that matter, I didn't see any necessity for committing myself on the point. I didn't wish to tell her that I felt perfectly convinced that spiritualism was the hugest humbug of the age, and that its votaries and votaresses, herself included, were compounded of about equal parts of knave, fool, and swindler. I temporized.

"Really, madam," I replied, "I have never given spiritualism the careful consideration which so momentous a subject demands—"

"Enough: you *don't* believe in it. I *do*; and I *have* given it careful consideration. Mr. Rushworth, as sure as there is a God above us, there is some mystery associated with that horrible Painted Room where I saw you last evening."

Her tone was so sincere, so full of honest conviction, and, withal, so impressive, that I am ashamed to admit that I laughed in her face. I couldn't help it. She did not seem annoyed, but resumed—

"I had no sooner entered that room last night than I felt uncomfortable, and in less than two minutes afterwards I knew that its influences were of tremendous potency. The short time I spent there robbed me of a good deal of nerve-power; yet my object in calling upon you to-day is to persuade you

to bring me in contact with those influences again."

"But how, madam? I do not understand—"

"Listen. I have not rested since I was here yesterday; and it has been imparted to me that I must make some attempt to solve the mystery of that chamber before I can hope to obtain any rest. If you will spend an hour with me in that room to-night, I hope to accomplish my purpose; and if I don't convince you that there are more things on earth than are dreamt of in the philosophy of such men as you, I give you leave to proclaim me a worthless impostor from every housetop in Forestville."

A rational conversation this, I thought to myself, for the prosaic precincts of an attorney's office, in the middle of the nineteenth century. I did not wish to offend her, however—in the first place, on account of her sex; and in the second place, because her sister was my client, and might probably become a very profitable one. So I merely remarked—

"But are you not afraid of losing more 'nerve-power' than you can spare, if you spend an hour in the room?"

"No. I shall doubtless lose considerable, but I shall be prepared for that, and will steel myself against it."

"And," I stammered, "is it necessary that I should be present at the interview between yourself and your 'spiritual intelligences?'"

"I forgive your sneer, because you don't know of what you speak. Yes, it *is* necessary; because I am not fit to grapple with the influences alone, and my sister is too weak to be of any service—not that you will see anything."

Reader, laugh at me if you will; but I confess that in less than five minutes more she had succeeded in interesting me, and I had resolved to humour her. I undertook to procure the use of the room from Mr. McBean, as if for a consultation; and Mrs. Davidson was to call precisely at eight o'clock. The influences, she informed me, were always more propitious at night. Upon that understanding she took her leave.

I easily arranged the matter with my landlord; and at eight o'clock Mrs. Davidson arrived.

She removed her gloves, and sat down at one side of the centre table, placing the tips of her fingers upon the table, and requesting me to take my seat at the other side, placing

the tips of *my* fingers likewise upon the table. I obeyed, and we sat in silence for several minutes.

"There," said she, at the expiration of that time; "in order that you may know that I do not interfere physically in what is about to take place, I will withdraw from the table."

So saying, she took her seat on a sofa placed at least six feet from the nearest point of the table. I was perfectly cool and self-possessed, and waited patiently to hear what ridiculous excuse she would make when the table refused to budge at her command.

"Is any one present?" she demanded, from her place on the sofa.

I supposed her to be addressing me, and was about to reply that I saw no one but ourselves; when the table, upon which my hands were resting, arose at least six inches from the floor, and gave an audible knock.

I jumped from my seat, went down on my knees, and peered all about beneath the table.

"Sit down," quietly observed my companion. "You must surely know that that knock was produced by a much more powerful agency than mine. Don't lose time, for I am beginning to feel the strain already."

I silently and wonderingly obeyed, and placed my fingers on the table. At last I was interested with a vengeance.

"Who is it?" she asked.

She then repeated the letters of the alphabet in rotation until she came to the letter F, when the table gave a distinct rap. Beginning again at A, she went on until she came to R, when the table rapped again; and so on until the words "Franklin Osborne Hooper" had been spelt out. By this time, whether it was mere nervousness, or whether there really was some strange influence at work, I felt awe-struck, and, what was more singular, I felt tired.

"How long have you been dead?" was the next question put by the medium.

The table speedily rapped off—

"*Nineteen years.*"

"Where did you die?"

The answer came clear and distinct—

"*In this room.*"

"Of what did you die?"

I waited in breathless silence until the response came—

"I WAS MURDERED."

The cold perspiration burst from my forehead. I turned to my companion. A

great change had come over her. She was deathly pale, and evidently sinking from sheer exhaustion. She waved her hand to me to sit still, and summoned up strength to propound the query—

“By whom?”

Steadily and quietly came the answer—

“*By Granville Kimball.*”

I could bear it no longer. I had just strength to reach the door, which I quickly flung wide open. The atmosphere of the hall revived me somewhat. I turned to look at Mrs. Davidson, and perceived that she had fainted on the sofa.

I rushed across the room, and rather dragged than carried her into the hall. The atmosphere seemed to exert a like revivifying influence upon her. To seize my hat and hurry her down the stairs was the work of little more than a moment.

I walked silently by her side until we reached her sister's house. I opened the gate for her, and was about to say good night, when she took me by the arm and spoke.

“What steps do you intend to take about this?”

That was just what I had been asking myself all the way along.

“I don't know. What would you suggest?”

“Listen to me. Neither you nor I can tell whether what we have heard to-night is true.”

“Surely spirits never lie?” I remarked; and this time there was no sneer on my lip when I spoke of the spirits.

“A great mistake—they *do* lie, very often. For you must know that there are as many different characteristics among the inhabitants of the spirit-world as among mankind. And it is possible that to-night's disclosures may be the work of a mischief-making spirit, who wishes to render us ridiculous. Would it not therefore be better to ascertain whether such names as those we have heard are known in this neighbourhood, and whether the owner of one of them was murdered?”

I was astonished to hear such doctrine from such lips; but I understood her drift, and after a few moments' further conversation, I bent my steps to the Queen's Arms.

I thought the matter carefully over, and before I had arrived at my destination I had resolved upon a course of proceeding. I would feel my way very gradually.

A little before bed-time I contrived to get into conversation with the landlord of the Queen's Arms, whose name was Hotchkiss; in the course of which I asked—

“By the way, did you ever know Mr. Hooper?”

“Cooper, what Cooper?”

“Hooper,” I repeated—“Franklin Osborne Hooper.”

It appeared that, to the best of his recollection, he had never either known or heard of any person bearing that name. Neither had he ever known Granville Kimball, for the very sufficient reason that that personage had been burnt to death before his, Mr. Hotchkiss's, arrival in Forestville. Mr. Frazer, the postmaster, however, could tell me all about him, as Kimball and he had had frequent transactions together, and used to be pretty intimate, he believed. Kimball had formerly kept a tavern a little farther up the street. The tavern was burnt down about eight years ago, and Kimball had been burned to death in trying to save his cash-box. He had not borne a good character, and had been generally disliked. He had never been married, and had left neither relatives nor property behind him; the latter, what there was of it, which was not much, having all been consumed in the fire.

And that was all I could glean from Mr. Hotchkiss.

Next day, I casually dropped in, as though to have a little harmless gossip with Mr. Frazer. He was an insurance agent, and I gradually brought the conversation round to fires; from fires to that particular fire where Granville Kimball had met his fate; and thence to Kimball himself.

“O yes, he had known Kimball well—an unprincipled fellow, but who had nevertheless some good streaks about him. Hooper? No, he had never known any such name. Franklin Osborne Hooper? O yes, to be sure—a worthless, do-nothing sort of a chap that used to board with Kimball at the tavern. Yes, he had left Forestville years ago.”

“Left Forestville?” I repeated.

“Yes—let me see—ah, I remember. He had some money left him down in Tennessee; and a few days after getting it into his hands he left town for California, and has never been heard of since.”

In addition to this information, I was able in the course of that and the following day, by dint of questioning about a dozen other persons, to elicit what follows. Hooper used

to hang around Kimball's tavern, paying his board when he had any money, and going on tick when he had none. Kimball and he used to quarrel sometimes, and the latter had frequently been expelled from the tavern late at night for impudence and unruly conduct in his cups. Upon such occasions he used to walk down to the Cassidy House—that being the name of the building which contained the Painted Chamber. The Cassidy House was always vacant in those days; and, as the doors were never locked, he used to go in and sleep on the floor. Kimball often got mollified before bed-time, and then would go down and bring Hooper back again. Sometimes, instead of going himself, he would send any one who might happen to be loafing about the bar-room.

After some trouble, I succeeded in finding a man, by name Geordie Ferguson, who had at least twice to his recollection been despatched on this errand. On both occasions he had found Hooper asleep on the floor of the Painted Chamber; and Geordie believed that Hooper always went to that room when Kimball turned him out.

Not a hint of Hooper's having been murdered reached me from any quarter; in fact, such a thing was evidently not suspected by any of the inhabitants of the town. I communicated what I had heard to Mrs. Davidson, and we agreed that no good could come of saying anything about the matter. Not long afterwards she returned to her home at Rochester, where, when last I heard of her, she was still living. I have never seen her since, however; though for several years after the events above narrated I received occasional letters from her, inquiring whether or not I had succeeded in obtaining any further particulars. I have always been compelled to answer in the negative, though I went to some trouble and expense in advertising in the Tennessee and California papers for particulars respecting the missing Hooper. Not a single gleam of light has ever been thrown on this strange affair; and, until I took up my pen to write this letter, I have never acquainted any one with the history of my queer adventures in the Painted Chamber.

Here Mr. Rushworth's letter ends—at least so much thereof as may be supposed to have any general interest. It has been suggested to me by a gentleman whose judgment on literary matters I value very highly, that the preceding narrative might be rendered much

more effective by giving it an altogether different and less abortive termination. He has suggested that I ought to make the statements of the table turn out correct, by proving that Hooper was actually murdered by Kimball in the Painted Room. But there are three reasons why such a course would be objectionable to me. The first of these reasons consists in the fact that any such alteration as that suggested would be a wilful perversion of truth. Second, it would be tampering with my friend's manuscript. Third, it would appear to indicate the writer's belief in the doctrines of spiritualism.

It certainly seems inexplicable that—

But, there—I will simply present the narrative intact from Mr. Rushworth's letter, and leave each reader to solve the enigma for himself in such manner as he may.

A FRAGMENT FROM SPAIN.

AT the close of the year 1809, when the victorious English were advancing in all directions towards Madrid, and the hitherto invincible French legions were falling back towards their own frontier, a Spanish farmer, one José de Salvador, was captured by a squadron of French Cuirassiers who were covering the rear of Soult's main body.

At that time, as is now well known, the French were accustomed to shoot on the spot every Spaniard taken prisoner with arms in his hands; and the unfortunate farmer, when surrounded by the French, had unfortunately with him his gun, an old-fashioned fowling-piece, with which he had just shot one of his horses, which had an hour before broken his leg while at work in the fields. The Spaniard was at once dragged before Captain Marius de Violles, the commander of the Cuirassiers, and was immediately ordered by him to be hanged on the nearest tree.

The wretched farmer in vain pleaded his innocence. His hands were tied, and he was on the point of being executed, when the sound of a horse galloping was heard in the distance; and in a few moments a beautiful girl was seen coming towards the party at full speed.

She galloped into the midst of the French, and, dismounting and rushing towards the captain, implored him to spare her father. But, alas! all in vain—the captain was inex-