

# THE WESTERN STAR.

A Magazine

DEVOTED TO A RECORD OF THE FACTS, PHILOSOPHY, AND  
HISTORY OF THE COMMUNION BETWEEN

SPIRITS AND MORTALS.

PUBLISHED ON THE FIRST OF EVERY MONTH.

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THE HISTORY  
OR  
MODERN AMERICAN  
SPIRITUALISM:

A TWENTY YEARS' RECORD

OF THE

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BY

EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN.

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# THE WESTERN STAR.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY,

COMMENCING JULY 1, 1872.

## PROSPECTUS.

THE principal features aimed at in this undertaking are:—

*First.* To present the matter contained in each number in such form and size that any or all the articles can be preserved and bound in ordinary Library volumes.

*Secondly.* To establish a record of the deeply momentous events connected with modern Spiritualism, and to gather up and preserve such material as cannot be included in the columns of the weekly journals devoted to Spiritualism.

*Thirdly.* To open up opportunities for a free and fraternal interchange of facts and opinions with the Spiritualists of foreign countries.

*Fourthly.* To treat all topics of current interest from a purely Spiritualistic stand-point.

SECOND AND THIRD VOLUMES OF "MODERN AMERICAN SPIRITUALISM." The projectors of this magazine call especial attention to their design of securing from Mrs. EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN, the exclusive right to publish, in successive numbers, the voluminous and deeply interesting material she has prepared for the compilation of two additional volumes of "MODERN AMERICAN SPIRITUALISM."

In this wonderful assemblage of facts, records of special phenomena, and biographical sketches, Mrs. Britten is possessed of MSS. and other unpublished matter, as well as literature now out of print, which renders the treasures she has been collecting during many past years priceless, and fully equivalent to the worth of the yearly subscription.

Attention is solicited to the following synopsis of subjects sketched out by the immortal projectors of the work:—

- 1st. Leading Article.
- 2d. Biographical Sketches of the Mediums, Speakers, and Writers connected with Modern Spiritualism.
- 3d. Sketches of Sibyls, Prophets, and Ecstasies of the Ancient and Middle Ages.
- 4th. Examples of varied and marvelous Phenomenal Facts and the philosophy of their production.
- 5th. Foreign Spiritualism, Transatlantic Correspondence, etc.
- 6th. Communications from Spirits.
- 7th. Summary of Passing Events.
- 8th. A short essay on Politics, Religion, Popular Reforms, or other leading topics of the day, by the WESTERN STAR CIRCLE OF SPIRITS.

The projectors of the WESTERN STAR propose to conduct their work in the broadest and most fearless spirit of truth, yet pledge themselves to uphold the moral, religious, and scientific aspects of Spiritualism, free from all petty side issues or narrow fanaticisms.

As the human coöperators selected to carry out the work are rich only in the particular qualities which fit them for its conduct, they are compelled to inaugurate the first principle of justice in its establishment, by requiring that it shall be self-sustaining. Hence, wealthy Spiritualists sympathizing with this movement are solicited to contribute donations of such sums as will represent a large number of subscribers, and thereby induce its success and permanence. Every donor of sums which exceed the price of a single subscription, will be furnished with copies to the amount of their contributions.

Literary contributions will be gratefully received and respectfully considered; but the Company cannot pledge themselves to publish any article which does not accord with their best judgment.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION: \$4.00 per year; postage 24 cents extra. Single copies 25 cents.

Liberal allowances made to clubs, canvassing agents, etc.

The names of Subscribers, Donors, and Sympathizers with this movement are solicited with the least possible delay. Address by letter only.

EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN,

251 Washington Street, Boston.

Office 25 Bromfield Street, Boston, Mass.

# THE WESTERN STAR.

VOL. I.—JULY, 1872.—NO. 1.

## SALUTATORY.

ON the first day of July, 1872, THE WESTERN STAR will arise and take its place in the firmament of Spiritual literature.

How long the beams of this new luminary may continue to shed light upon the paths of Spiritualistic research, with what amount of benefit to mankind its radiance may be fraught, or indeed, how much of intrinsic worth may be evolved from its appearance at all, are problems the solution of which remains with the invisible world from whence its birth has been derived.

A glance at the Prospectus which forms the preamble of this work, will show what claim is made for the relations which subsist between the immortal employers and their mortal employees. The presentation of this claim is not urged as an excuse to justify an enterprise which in the eyes of the world may hereafter seem to be a failure. The human executants herein engaged believe, in the language of their spiritual associates, "that, under the promptings of faithful effort and honest endeavor, there are no failures."

Human opinion and the limitations of time can never destroy a really valuable idea; and since we have an eternity granted to us in which to unfold the germ seeds of

thought; the ideas projected in this magazine, being based, as we claim, on a wisdom more prescient than man's, and far-seeing enough to discern the end from the beginning, will, either now or hereafter, in this generation or those to come, blossom into the fully developed uses designed by its spiritual authors.

The little knot of individuals who compose the "Western Star Company," feel, though in an immeasurably limited sense, like the Jewish Lawgiver contemplating from afar off the attractive glories of the Promised Land.

They would fain bequeath to posterity a complete encyclopædia of the marvelous work which has been achieved by the angels for humanity in their generation. To leave behind them a fair and ample record of what has been done and said through the intervention of the world of spirits in the present momentous half century of time, is the Canaan which looms up before the longing eyes of these earnest workers; but whether they will be permitted to carry their readers forward into the accomplishment of their great endeavor, they themselves know no more than did Moses, when he strove to lead to the land of promise an unsympathetic multitude, amidst the horrors of a barren wilderness.

The "Western Star Company" have found but little more sympathy in their pilgrimage through a financial wilderness, than the ancient record ascribes to the followers of Moses; but like him they depend for the practical ultimatum of their work on a higher power than their own; like him they have determined to take one glimpse of their Canaan before they go hence, and if they may not be privileged to complete the work they begin in this number, at least they will be in a position to commend the idea of their unfinished record to the industrious scribes and collaters of the next generation.

Eschewing the pleasing custom of entering into merely

friendly or congratulatory relations with our readers in this address, it seems to be more to the purpose to enlarge upon such points of our new enterprise as may not be fully elaborated in the Prospectus.

As an object of primary importance, we call attention to the aims announced in the first and second sections of the Prospectus, and submit that it is the solemn duty of all who have been recipients of the blessings and benefits conferred on them by Spiritualism, to aid, as far as may be, in establishing and perpetuating a record of the marvelous events which have transpired in their generation, and in handing down that record to posterity, instead of leaving posterity to gather up its materials from the dubious and unreliable realms of oral tradition. It may be alleged that files of some of the excellent periodicals which the movement has called forth, have been preserved, and can always become accessible to future generations.

Experience, however, has proved that such sources of information will be insufficient and not easily attainable. Many of the Spiritual periodicals are out of print; and although bound volumes of the *Spiritual Telegraph* and *Banner of Light* may be procured, their great size and scarcity in bound volumes would necessarily exclude them from general circulation. Besides these objections, a still more formidable one arises in the fact that any weekly periodical, however special its character may be, as the organ of a denomination, in order to supply the demands of the hour, must include the general features of the newspaper, and branch out in many directions of thought and varieties of detail, the interest of which will cease with the passing hour, and conjoin, with the material desirable to preserve, much that would be evanescent and irrelevant to the readers of the future. One object of this magazine, therefore, will be — as stated in sections



first and second of the Prospectus — to conserve in the form and size of library volumes, some solid matter which cannot be included in the weekly Spiritual newspapers, and to stereotype, in the same useful form, some of the many valuable items which these periodicals contain, but which only a few persons can possess themselves of in bound volumes, or which it might be tedious to search for, amidst a mass of subjects of merely transient interest.

With the objects above stated in view, the "Western Star Company" earnestly hope their motives will not be misconstrued, or become the subject of ungenerous criticism, if they transfer important items from the columns of the weekly periodicals to their own storehouse of conserved forces; and whilst gratefully and candidly crediting the information they propose to publish to its original sources, they trust the unselfish desire of stereotyping the glad tidings they repeat for the general good, will animate alike their readers and contemporaries.

The following excerpt from the Prospectus is deemed of sufficient importance to reprint in this article, without any other words of commendation to the reader's attention than the interest it contains:—

"SECOND AND THIRD VOLUMES OF 'MODERN AMERICAN SPIRITUALISM.' The projectors of this magazine call especial attention to their design of securing from Mrs. EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN the exclusive right to publish in successive numbers, all the voluminous and deeply interesting material she has prepared for the compilation of two additional volumes of 'MODERN AMERICAN SPIRITUALISM.'

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Suggesting to the reader a careful reperusal of the synopsis of subjects sketched in the Prospectus, we conclude our exposition of the good intentions we cherish,

by premising that there may appear, in the conduct of this work, some peculiarities which may present themselves somewhat unfavorably to the pedant, who is better acquainted with the mechanical conventionalities of the printing office, than the subtle influences which link together the minds of reader and author, for example.

We shall take leave, as far as is practicable, to dispense with the tedium of foot-notes, and in remembrance of the personal annoyance occasioned by these harassing interruptions, endeavor to embody all the matter we have to present in continuous pages.

As a most stringent charge has been laid upon the conductors of this work to avoid to the utmost of their ability the repulsive and unspiritual practice of indulging in acrimonious personalities, and as the aforesaid conductors are not ashamed to acknowledge that they respect the charge of those intelligences whose work this is, they sincerely hope it will not be imposed upon them — as a necessity for repelling falsehood — to answer, or even to notice adverse criticisms. That unfavorable or even unfriendly opinions will be written and spoken concerning *THE WESTERN STAR*, is a contingency which the sublimity of egotism could not expect to escape from. By a compact entered into between the mundane and supermundane members of the company, *THE WESTERN STAR* will neither shun, court, nor answer, any criticisms which come in the form of opinions merely. Such criticisms, like the magazine itself, will stand before the world only for what they are worth; but if that same world should deem the writers in these pages pusillanimous or self convicted for receiving harsh criticisms in silence, we herewith premise that we are prepared to do so in conformity with a plan of action suggested by wiser counselors than the slaves of conventional custom, or the promoters of journalistic strife.

Since it is "human to err," much error and many mistakes may creep into this work. These, when respectfully pointed out, will be as respectfully acknowledged and repaired; beyond this, another of our peculiarities is our firm resolve not to enter the realm of critical recrimination with any one.

The corps of contributors who are associated together under the cognomen of the "Western Star Company," have received their appellation from a certain basic principle in the science of correspondences revealed to them by spirit friends. Their writings, as far as personal identity goes, therefore, will be anonymous, always excepting the chapters devoted to Emma Hardinge Britten's "History of Modern American Spiritualism," or such other contributions as may be sent to the company with the names of the writers appended.

And now nothing remains but for us to offer our long delayed greeting to our readers. It is given in a few words. Friends, we congratulate you, no less than ourselves, that we are living in a day which seers and prophets have yearned to behold. Our generation witnesses the fruition of hopes which ages have cherished in vain, and beholds the solution of problems which have distracted the race from the beginning of time. If Spiritualism is "the despair of science," in its material aspects, it is the crowning glory and triumph of science in its physical revealments. That death has been transfigured into life eternal, and the grave disclosed as the gate which conducts the soul to immortality, proves also that every beam of light that streams from this newly discovered firmament of mind, is a fresh star of promise, a fresh lamp held by the hands of angels.

Let every pilgrim in search of Spiritual light and knowledge, then, extend the hand of kindly greeting to the messenger who comes to them so significantly in the

luminous shape of a Star in the far West. . . Eighteen centuries ago, tradition affirms that a star, undiscovered till then, appeared in the Oriental firmament, as a messenger to proclaim on earth the advent of a high and holy spiritual Teacher. The sifting processes of history now prove to us that few were the mortal eyes that recognized the radiance of that star, fewer still the prophetic minds which could compass its deep significance. If a similar fate should befall the Star which now arises in the Occidental firmament, those who can and do feel its significance, and reverence the sources of its apparition, will know from time-honored precedent how to bear the world's coldness, and man's lack of sympathy. Even the transient meteor is not lost out of the laboratory of creation. Its light and life is only quenched to the eyes of men, but somewhere in the realms of infinity every atomic particle of the fallen Star will be outworking its special mission of use.

Time, the touchstone of truth, has unfolded the lone star of Bethlehem into the sun of ages, before whose light countless millions bow down in worship. Science, the unwritten bible of creation, has tracked the existence of the vanished meteor into the laboratories of the imperishable.

In some point of space midway, perchance, between the steady lustre of the Eastern luminary, and the transient glory of the flying meteor, our WESTERN STAR will accomplish whatever destiny the wise Disposer of events may see fit to assign to it.

Committing our labors in its behalf and all their results to the waters of time, we behold our frail bark launched, nor even question that THE WESTERN STAR, freighted with tidings from the land of light, borne on the winds of holy aspiration, and dedicated to the service of God and the angels, will fulfill every iota of the mis-

sion mapped out for it, and here or hereafter find the results of its earnest aims and unselfish purposes laid up in the treasure houses of the land whose compensations fail not.

SIRIUS.

# MODERN AMERICAN SPIRITUALISM;

OR,

A HISTORY OF TWENTY YEARS OF OPEN COMMUNION  
BETWEEN THE WORLD OF SPIRITS AND MORTALS.

BY

EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN.

VOL. II.—CHAPTER I.

## I.

### MODERN SPIRITUALISM IN AMERICA PRIOR TO THE DATE OF THE ROCHESTER KNOCKINGS.

#### CHAPTER I.

*Wonderful Spiritual Manifestations in Maine, in the Years 1800-1806.*

“There is no death ! The stars go down  
To rise upon some fairer shore,  
And bright in heaven’s jeweled crown  
There shine for evermore.  
And ever near us, though unseen,  
The dear immortals tread,  
For all the boundless universe  
Is life. There are no dead !”

WHILST every age and country of the earth has left us some record of communion with spiritual intelligences when conditions for their manifestation were favorable, no systematic method of reducing this communion to scientific order has ever been attempted, until the Fox family fortuitously hit upon the idea of conversing through the alphabet with the invisible rapper who disturbed the peace of their household at the village of Hydesville, N. Y., in 1848.

Except in the lost arts of ancient “Magic” “Witchcraft” and “Divination,” the idea that a communion between the spiritual and natural worlds could be effected by means of telegraphic signals was never dreamed of: hence the discovery of this method is justly attributed to the “rapping spirits” of 1848, and their shrewd little Rochester mediums.

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The circumstances which have induced the author to treat the advent of the celebrated "Rochester knockings" as an era from which the great modern Spiritual outpouring commences, have been sufficiently enlarged upon in the first volume of "Modern American Spiritualism," but before we resume the history of the first twenty years of that wonderful communion, we shall call attention to some of those earlier manifestations of spirit presence which might well be regarded as premonitory signs of the approaching day of universal marvel.

We have elsewhere noticed the remarkable mental phenomena evolved by the widespread practices of animal magnetism, also the prevalence of spiritual gifts amongst the Quakers, Shakers, Mormons, and other fervid sects of religionists. Since, however, it is desirable in a history so special in time and place as this present, to avail ourselves of some decided chronological landmarks, we shall limit our immediate observation of early American Spiritualism to the commencement of the present century.

One of the most extraordinary manifestations of spirit communion that is to be found on authentic record as occurring in America prior to the date of the Rochester knockings, took place in the year 1800, in the State of Maine, and a general account is given of its marvelous details in a pamphlet written by the Rev. Abraham Cummings, an eye-witness of the wonderful phenomena he describes. The title of the pamphlet is "Immortality proved by the Testimony of Sense," etc. The publisher adds on a fly leaf: "Immortality proved by phenomena that were witnessed by hundreds in the town of Sullivan, Maine, in the year 1800. Published by an eye-witness, the Rev. Abraham Cummings, a man eminent in learning and piety; a graduate of Harvard University."

The pamphlet, which is a series of letters, arguments,

allusions to portions of the history supposed to be known to the reader, and affidavits of various witnesses — contains circumstantial details of the apparition of a Mrs. Butler, who manifested her presence to hundreds of people by rappings; preternatural lights, singing, speaking with an audible voice, and frequent appearances in her own as well as other forms.

Besides Mr. Cummings' pamphlet, the author has gathered up a mass of information on this subject from various publications of the time, as well as the oral testimony of several persons whose nearest relatives were residents in Sullivan, and themselves eye-witnesses of the extraordinary scenes here related. From all these sources, it appears that a certain Capt. Butler, residing near Sullivan, Maine, married Miss Nelly Hooper, who, ten months after her marriage, gave birth to one child, and passed with her infant into the spirit world. Shortly after this lady's decease, Capt. Butler became the accepted lover of a Miss Blaisdell, whose father, like his own, was violently opposed to the match.

In this state of things, and whilst the lovers were vainly attempting to soften the obduracy of their parents, the spirit of Mrs. Nelly Butler became an active participator in the scene. She manifested herself in the various modes before described, in the houses of Mr. Blaisdell, Mr. Butler, and her own father, Mr. Hooper. She appeared to, and audibly conversed with her mother and sisters; urged her father to visit Mr. Butler, with a view of persuading him that the manifestations that now began to astound the whole country, were not, as he willfully persisted in asserting, the artful contrivance of Miss Blaisdell, but were in reality produced by herself, the spirit of his daughter. Her father, mother, and sisters, became so entirely convinced of the spirit's identity that they published circumstantial details of her visitation,

attested by their solemn affidavits. One of the purposes alleged by the spirit to have influenced her appearance, was to procure the consent of the parents to the marriage of her late husband with Miss Blaisdell. To the latter she seemed to manifest an extraordinary attachment, and constantly declared that the union was destined by Heaven, and should take place.

It appears that after the decease of Mrs. Nelly Butler, strong suspicions were entertained of foul play, and a trial, attended with circumstances of much suspicion and many curious allegations, took place, to ascertain the manner of her death. The "spectre" herself, as the phrase went, made several communications to different parties on the subject, and the general impression which prevailed in the community was, that the frequent apparition of this unresting spirit was attributable to the fact that her life was cut short by violence.

As the immediate descendants of the three families involved in this dark scandal are still living, and reside at the scene of the hauntings, we do not feel justified in entering into any further details. The Rev. Abraham Cummings alludes but slightly to the trial, the decision of the grand jury, and the persecutions which attended the various members of the families connected with the entire transactions.

One thing is certain: the lapse of over seventy years since the period of these strange occurrences, has not been sufficient to erase the impression that Mrs. Nelly Butler was murdered, and that to this cause was attributable her pertinacious visitations to the scene of her earthly wrongs.

Mrs. Butler's spirit often walked by the side of Miss Blaisdell in the light of day, and the full sight of astonished witnesses. She was frequently seen in the fields, lanes, and woods, besides the houses which she frequented,

where she would pass from room to room, and when the inmates, terrified by her apparition, fled from the apartment, she would kindly assure them she would not intrude upon their presence, but meet with them whenever they wished to see or converse with her in the cellars of their dwellings. In the cellar of Mr. Blaisdell's house she conversed for several hours on different occasions with the crowds who flocked thither to witness the manifestations. Sometimes she appeared to a number of persons at a time, occasionally in the likeness of her former self, but still oftener in a fleecy mass of white shadowy light. When the parents of the lovers, awed by the preternatural interference of this wonderful apparition, finally gave their consent to the union, the spirit presented herself at the wedding festivities, and there foretold the death of the bride within ten months, together with the birth and death of one child. These dark predictions, like many other of her prophecies, proved correct, but the decease of the second Mrs. Butler seems to have had no effect in laying the spirit of her predecessor. From the pertinacity with which she urged on the marriage, and her frequent appearance in the house and about the person of Miss Blaisdell, suspicion had attached to the latter as having simulated the phenomena for the purpose of effecting a union with Capt. Butler; but when it was found that her appearances after the marriage were more frequent than before, whilst her visitations continued with equal force and intensity after the second Mrs. Butler's death, this hypothesis became untenable; neither would the facts of the case conform with the assumption that Miss Blaisdell's mediumship was essential to the production of the phenomena, which continued, as we have stated, long after her decease.

Mention is made in Mr. Cummings' pamphlet of a singular act, enjoined in the most solemn manner by

the "spectre," namely, the digging up and reinterment of her child's body, which she desired to be buried in a different place. At the reinterment, which caused great scandal in the neighborhood, the spirit attended in person, singing and chanting in a voice which was audible to over eighty people who were present at the ceremony. She appears to have been very piously disposed, singing hymns, quoting Scripture, praying, exhorting, and representing herself as "in heaven, with Jesus and the angels." Hundreds of witnesses saw and heard this spirit, many of them people of the first standing, whose veracity and candor was unquestioned; notwithstanding this, the three families chiefly concerned became the subject of the most cruel calumnies, bitter persecutions, and finally of the trial above alluded to, during the course of which upwards of forty affidavits were given by some of the most respectable persons in the community, confirmatory of the statements above alleged, and descriptive of the various modes in which the "spectre" had manifested herself. As the Rev. Abraham Cummings has given several very interesting and minute details of the modes in which the ghostly visitant's presence was regarded, besides having published in full the affidavits of the whole forty witnesses examined on the trial, we shall refer our readers to the following quotations from his pamphlet, for the better understanding of the marvelous circumstances narrated:

"The times, places, and modes of her appearing were various. Sometimes she appeared to one alone, sometimes to two or three, then to five, six, ten, or twelve, again to twenty, and once to more than forty witnesses. She appeared in several apartments of Mr. Blaisdell's house, and several times in the cellar. She also appeared at other houses, and in the open fields. There, white as the light, she moved like a cloud above the ground in

personal form and magnitude, and in the presence of more than forty people. She tarried with them till after daylight, and vanished; not because she was afraid of the sun, for she had then several times appeared when the sun was shining. Once in particular, when she appeared in the room where the family were, about eleven o'clock in the day, they all left the house; but convinced of the impropriety of their conduct, they returned.

"At another time, when several neighbors were at the house, and were conversing on these remarkable events, a young lady in the company declared that, though she had heard the discourse of the spectre, she would never believe that there had been a spectre among us, unless she could see her.

"In a few minutes after, the spectre appeared to several persons, and said she must come into the room where the company was. One of those who saw her, pleaded that she would not. The spectre then asked, 'Is there a person here who desires to see me?' The young lady was then called, who, with several others, saw the spectre. 'Here I am,' said she, 'satisfy yourselves.' The lady owned that she was satisfied. It was now about two o'clock in the day. In short, the ghost appeared or conversed almost as frequently in the day as in the night.

"In all the appearances of the spectre she was as white as the light, and this whiteness was as clear and visible in a dark cellar and dark night, as when she appeared in the open field and in the open day. At a certain time, August 9th, she informed a number of people that she meant to appear before them (for she frequently conversed without appearing at all), that they must stand in order, and behave in a solemn manner: 'For the Lord,' said she, 'is a God of order.' Accordingly she appeared and vanished before them several times. At first they saw a small body

of light, which continually increased till it formed the shape and magnitude of a person.

"This personal shape approached so near to Captain Butler, that he put his hand upon it, and it passed down through the apparition as through a body of light, in the view of thirteen persons, who all saw the apparition, which rose into personal form, face and features, in a moment; returned to a shapeless mass, resumed the person, and vanished again directly. They saw that which was not *afraid* to be handled by them, for she passed slowly by them, near enough for that purpose.

"As to the witnesses, not one of them has ever been accused or even suspected of being concerned in an artifice. Some of them are aged, others young. They had, and still have, professions, employments, and interests widely different, and belong to different families. . . .

"She mentioned several incidents of her past life, known only to her husband, as he declared, and asked him if he remembered them. He said yes. She asked him if he had told them. He answered no; and of such a nature were those incidents as to render it utterly improbable that he ever should have mentioned them before. This was at the time when he attempted to handle the apparition.

"Once, when she conversed with about fourteen persons, Mr. Blaisdell, having heard that his father was sick, asked the spectre whether she knew anything, or not, concerning him. 'Your father,' she replied, 'is in heaven, praising God with the angels.' He afterwards found that his father, two hundred miles distant, died three days before this answer of the ghost, and his friends at York, where his father lived, utterly deny that they sent the news in the course of these days. . . .

"At the time when fifty people heard her discourse, while more than forty saw her, to some of them, — who

no more believed these extraordinary events than mankind now do in general,—she mentioned several occurrences of her past life, known to them and her, in order to satisfy them that she was the very person she professed to be. Almost all this company had been acquainted with her in her life-time; and a considerable number of them very intimately. She desired that any of them would ask what questions they pleased, for the removal of any doubts respecting her. Accordingly certain persons did propose several questions respecting a number of events in her past life. To all these inquiries, she gave completely satisfactory answers.

“She foretold what the opinion and conduct of mankind would be with regard to her, and the ill-treatment which Mr. Blaisdell’s family would receive on her account. She not only declared the necessity, but foretold the certainty of the marriage at an hour when both the parties and both the families opposed it.

“Within thirty hours after Mrs. Butler’s marriage, the spectre predicted that she would become the parent of but one child, and then die. Ten months after this her child was born, and she died the next day. The safe return of one bound to the West-Indies was also foretold and accomplished.

“These predictions are all fulfilled, and were previously and sufficiently known in this vicinity for evidence that they were such. She uttered several other predictions now accomplished. . . . .

“Some time in July, 1806, in the evening, I was informed by two persons that they had just seen the spectre in the field.

“About ten minutes after, I went out, not to see a miracle, for I believed that they had been mistaken. Looking toward an eminence twelve rods distant from the house, I saw there, as I supposed, one of the white rocks.



This confirmed my opinion of their spectre, and I paid no more attention to it. Three minutes after, I accidentally looked in the same direction, and the white rock was in the air; its form a complete globe, white, with a tincture of red, like the damask rose, and its diameter about two feet.

"Fully satisfied that this was nothing ordinary, I went toward it for more accurate examination.

"While my eye was constantly upon it, I went on four or five steps, when it came to me from the distance of eleven rods, as quick as lightning, and instantly assumed a personal form with a female dress, but did not appear taller than a girl seven years old. While I looked upon her, I said in my mind, 'You are not tall enough for the woman who has so frequently appeared among us.' Immediately she grew up as large and as tall as I considered that woman to be. Now she appeared glorious. On her head was the representation of the sun diffusing the luminous rectilinear rays everywhere to the ground. Through the rays I saw the personal form, and the woman's dress. Then I recollected the objection of the Encyclopædia, that 'ghosts always appear to one alone.' Now, said my mind, I see you as plainly as ever I saw a person on earth; but were I to converse with you an hour, what proof could I produce that I ever conversed with you at all? This, with my fear, was the reason why I did not speak to her. But my fear was connected with ineffable pleasure.

"Life, simplicity, purity, glory, all harmonizing in this celestial form, had the most delightful effect on my mind. And there appeared such a dullness afterwards upon all corporeal objects as I never perceived before. I went into the house and gave the information, not doubting that she had come to spend some time with us, as she had before. We went out to see her again; but to my great disappointment, she had vanished. Then I saw one

of the great errors of my life. That I had not spoken to her, has been the matter of my regret from that hour to this."

"Some time in March, 1800, she talked a few minutes without appearing, at eight o'clock in the morning, and promised to come again that day; at two o'clock she performed her promise, and talked with four people two hours. It was then she uttered these words: 'Though my body is consumed, and all turned to dust, my soul is as much alive as before I left the body.' This conversation was indeed in the cellar, but the place was enlightened with her radiance.

"*May 21st.* — At ten o'clock, she appeared to two persons, and sent a message to another.

"*May 25th.* — Ten o'clock. Appeared and conversed with two witnesses, while a third person heard the conversation; and revealed that by which the same was proved to others.

"*May 26th.* — She appeared at eight o'clock in the morning, and talked with four persons an hour and a half. In half an hour after, she appeared and talked with the same four persons, while two others heard a voice, without knowing what was said.

"*May 27th.* — Talked with two persons, and promised to be present at a meeting of about twenty people, which was to be held the next day in the evening. Accordingly, she appeared at this meeting to persons who were ignorant of the promise. The assembly was immediately interrupted by the declaration, that 'the spirit is come.' The next evening after, she conversed with a couple of persons, and told them by her inimitable voice to whom she had appeared." . . .

"Her conversation was always with grace, seasoned with salt, very affecting and delightful.

"*August 13th.* — At ten o'clock, she talked with three persons invisibly. At two o'clock the same day, she appeared and talked to three people in the hearing of five other persons."

Of forty depositions and affidavits, given by as many different persons in reference to this remarkable affair, we insert the following as specimens. The first is from one who appears to have been constitutionally skeptical, and whose very circumstantial testimony is on that account all the more valuable.

TESTIMONY OF MISS HANNAH FATCOMB.

"*August 9th, 10th.* — I was at the house of Mr. Blaisdell by the persuasion of others; for as to myself, I made very light of the matter, supposing that the whole was the contrivance of certain persons.

"We heard rappings, and these sounds were spoken to, but no answer obtained. After much altercation (which is needless to rehearse), we all came out of the cellar, and all went off, except a few persons, of whom I was one. Some of Mr. Blaisdell's family uttered severe expressions against those who went off and did not believe. 'What do you want they should believe?' said I; 'for my part, I see nothing to believe.' Immediately Mrs. Butler came in from the entry, very much affrighted. 'If any one desires to be convinced,' said she, 'let him look there in the entry.' I looked there and saw nothing. Soon after this, while Mrs. Butler was sitting on the foot of a bed, we heard a sound right against her on the outside of the house. Mr. Butler told her to speak to it. At first she refused. They told her she must. Then she said to it, 'If I am guilty, stay away; if I am clear in the name of the Lord, clear me.' The spirit then rapped very hard, so as to shake the house. Some of the company said she must go into the cellar. 'So I must,'

said she; 'if I do not, she will come into the room; and if she does, I shall die. Who will go with me?' D—— A—— said she would go. They went, and soon after we all went down. Then I plainly heard the voice say to Mrs. Butler, 'Go up, that the people may not think it is you who speak.' I saw her go up into the room, and heard at the same time the voice in the cellar. Mr. Blaisdell asked the spirit whence she came. She answered, 'I am from heaven. I am with God and Christ, angels and seraphim, praising God. Glory, glory, glory!'

"Mr. Blaisdell asked why she did not manifest herself in the fore part of that night to all the people. She answered, 'I was not permitted to come where there was so much sin.'

"The spirit then said to Mr. Blaisdell, 'Ask the people if they are convinced.'

"He did so; and I among the rest answered that I was.

"Then the spirit said, 'I must appear;' and by her direction we placed ourselves in order. Then I saw a white appearance, at first not more than a foot in height, but it appeared larger and larger, and more plainly; and when it came nearer to me, I was struck with fear, and left the cellar; but others told me that afterward they saw the spirit plainly.

"*August 13th, 14th.* — I again went to Mr. Blaisdell's with forty-seven persons.

"The spirit now told us again that she was from heaven, and that she was once Nelly Hooper. After much conversation, the spirit said that some of the people were faint, and could not hear all that was to be said; and that we must go up and refresh ourselves.

"'You must go with me to two places this night,' said she, 'and you must be ready at one o'clock.'

"'What o'clock is it now?' said Mr. Blaisdell.

"She said, 'Twelve, twelve, twelve!'

"We went up immediately and looked on the watch, and it was exactly twelve.

"In a short time, hearing the usual sign, we returned. Among many other words which I do not remember, Mr. Downing asked the spirit if she knew him; she answered, 'Yes,' and called him by name. He asked her if she was ever at his house. She answered that she had been once there with her mother. At length she told us that we must go up, and she would walk with us behind, with Mrs. Butler. 'But you must walk in order, two and two,' said she, 'singing a psalm; for God is a God of order.' Some person asked when she would be ready. She said, 'I will let you know.'

"Some person again asked what o'clock it was. She answered *one*. We went up and again looked on the watch, and it was *one*. We attended prayer, and immediately after she knocked. A psalm was chosen, which the greatest number of us could best remember, and it was sung as we walked. I was now far forward, and did not see the spirit. When we came to Capt. Millar's, the spirit rapped there, and Capt. Millar, with Capt. Paul Blaisdell, and some others, went into the cellar, and I heard them talk, but could not understand what was said to them. Then word came to us that we must stand out in the field before the house — that she would appear before us, and walk with Mrs. Butler, that the people might be convinced that Mrs. Butler had told the truth in relating that she had walked with her before. Then we all stood before the house. Mrs. Butler put on a black cloak, and when she had walked a little distance from us, as before directed by the spirit, I heard her groan bitterly, and soon after I saw the appearance of a woman in white walking with her. Suddenly Mrs. Butler sung a part of that hymn called 'New Jerusalem.' Then she came to us, and we all went back in order to Mr. Blais-

dell's. I then looked back and saw a person in white, walking with Mrs. Butler. After we returned to the house, Mrs. Butler appeared very weary and exhausted.

"I asked her at what time the spirit came to her. She told me it was after she had walked a little distance from the people. 'When you heard me groan,' said she, 'then I saw it coming towards me; I am always more afraid when I only see it than I am after it has spoken to me; and she then told me not to be scared, that she was not come to hurt me, and that if I would sing a hymn it would expel my fears.'"

The following is the testimony of Capt. Millar, whose house was the scene of the remarkable visitation above mentioned:—

#### TESTIMONY OF CAPTAIN JAMES MILLAR.

"*August 7th.* — Mr. Blaisdell came to my house, and desired me to go to his own, where I might hear and see for myself. He also went to Capt. Samuel Simson's with the same request. Capt. Simson and his wife, S—— B——, and N—— G——, who were there, came with him to my house, and we all went to Mr. Blaisdell's. When we had been there some minutes, Capt. Simson, by desire, prayed. His prayer was immediately followed by a knocking, and we all went into the cellar. Mr. Blaisdell asked what was wanted, and who it was. It answered, 'I was once Nelly Hooper.' I asked, 'How was man made?' 'Out of the dust,' said the voice; 'dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. You have the Bible, and that is God's truth, and do you abide by it. Love God, and keep his commandments.' After some conversation with Mrs. Simson and others, she said, 'I must go,' and we heard no more. It was now broad daylight, the outer cellar door being open, and utterly impossible that any living person should be there but those whom we could see and know. The voice was about six feet from me.

"*August 9th.* — I went to that house with many people, among whom I observed much disorderly behavior. The spirit spoke but little, and I returned with a resolution to go no more to that house on such an errand.

"*August 14th.* — Just before daylight, I heard singing as I lay in bed, approaching to my house. Presently, by my leave, my house was filled with people, and I heard knockings on the floor. By the desire of certain persons, I went into the cellar with Capt. Paul Blaisdell. After some discourse of the voice with him, which I understood not; I heard sounds of knocking near me. I asked, 'What do you want of me?' It answered, 'I have come to let you know that I can speak in this cellar as well as in the other. Are you convinced?' I answered, 'I am.' 'Now,' said the voice, 'the company must be solemn, and stand in order before your door; I am going to appear. Now, do you remember that I was once Nelly Hooper?' We went up, and complied with her direction, and I saw a personal shape coming towards us, white as the light. By the spectre's order, as I was informed, Mrs. Butler went towards her. 'Lydia,' said the spectre, 'you are scared, you must sing.' Then she sung a hymn. The spirit came almost to us, then turned, and Mrs. Butler with her, and went several rods towards Capt. Simson's, and appeared to take her by the hand, to urge her on further, and disappeared in our sight. Mrs. Butler returned, and informed the company, as I was told, that if they would walk to Mr. Blaisdell's solemnly, as to a funeral, the spirit would walk with Mrs. Butler, behind them. The company did so. But I, being far forward, saw nothing.

JAMES MILLAR."

#### TESTIMONY OF MRS. MARY JORDAN.

"On the 4th of August, 1800, about two hours before daylight, while I slept at Mr. Blaisdell's house, I was

awaked by the sound of knocking. I got up, and with about twenty others went into the cellar. There I heard a voice speaking to us, as I never heard before nor since. It was shrill, but very mild and pleasant.

"Mr. Blaisdell, addressing the voice, said that several persons (of whom I was one) had come from a distance to obtain satisfaction, and desired that she would tell us who she was, and the design of her coming.

"She answered that she was once Nelly Hooper, and after she was married, became Nelly Butler.

"After much conversation of a religious nature, she appeared to us. At first the apparition was a mere mass of light; then it grew into a personal form, about as tall as myself. We stood in two ranks, about four feet apart. Between these ranks she slowly passed and repassed, so that any of us could have handled her. When she passed by me, she was so near that if she had been a substance I should certainly have felt it. The apparition had a constant tremulous motion. At last the personal form became shapeless, expanded every way, and vanished in a moment.

"Nothing more being now seen or heard, we were moving to go up, when the voice desired us to tarry longer.

"We did so, and the spirit talked with us another hour, even till broad daylight. She mentioned to us the ill-treatment which Mr. Blaisdell's family had suffered by reproach and false accusation, and told us they would on her account be yet more despised and ridiculed.

"Her discourse concluded by a solemn exhortation. After speaking much more that I cannot remember, she sang praises, and left us. Her notes were very pleasant. Her words were no higher than common, yet they were exceedingly impressive.

MARY JORDAN."



TESTIMONY OF MRS. WENTWORTH (SISTER OF THE APPARITION).

"On the 2d of January, 1800, Hannah Blaisdell came to Mr. Butler's house, and informed me that the extraordinary voice which they had heard, had declared itself to be that of my sister, and that I must go to her father's house.

"I replied to her face that I did not believe it. The next day I received the same message from three other persons of other families, to whom I returned the same answer.

"Nevertheless, I was at last persuaded, and accompanied Capt. Butler and my husband to Mr. Blaisdell's house. Capt. Butler and I examined the cellar with a candle. Capt. Simson and some others went with us.

"I held Lydia (Mrs. Butler) by the arm, when we heard a loud knocking, and the sound of a voice which brought fresh to my mind my sister's voice.

"This voice spoke several sentences, which were such as my sister used to utter, and from this time I cleared Lydia of the voice, and accused the devil.

"*August 8th.* — Was there again with about thirty others, and heard much conversation. The voice was still hoarse and thick, like that of my sister on her death-bed, but more hollow. Sometimes it was clear and pleasant.

"*August 14th.* — I heard the same voice in the same place, and did then believe it was my sister. She talked much with Capt. Simson, and exhorted the people. I heard a private conversation which I had with my sister in her life-time, and which I had never repeated to any one. We were alone together; but may it not have been overheard by some evil spirit who now personates my sister? I know of no reason for her coming.

"SALLY WENTWORTH."

## TESTIMONY OF MR. JAMES SPRINGER.

"August 13th, 1800.—After much conversation with the spectre, she told us that she must talk and appear at the house of Capt. Millar, because he had reported that she could not be anywhere but at Mr. Blaisdell's house. 'And Lydia must walk with me,' she said, 'that you may all see that she is one person, and I another.'

"We walked in order, two and two, to the house, and I saw the spirit appear and disappear several times.

"Whilst we were at Capt. Millar's house, we stood in the field, whilst Mrs. Butler, in great fear, walked with the spirit, before our eyes, a few rods towards Mr. Simson's.

"Then Mrs. Butler came to us and said we must return to her father's house, two and two, singing a hymn, and she and the spectre would walk with us. We did so. Mr. Paul Simson and I walked behind, if possible to see the apparition. When we had walked about fifteen rods, I saw a white appearance to the left hand. As we passed it, it fell into rank, and walked with Mrs. Butler. Mr. Downing and I turned and looked upon them, and heard them talk. We kept walking on, then stopping to look at them, all the way. We heard them speaking all the time, but in a low voice. The spirit appeared in a personal form, with arms locked, as white as snow, and about as tall as Mrs. Butler.

"Soon after daybreak I saw it plainly vanish.

"JAMES SPRINGER."

Most of the affidavits are to the same effect as the above. Many of them state that the spirit often appeared, bearing a very small child in her arms. That the particles of luminous matter that seemed to compose her were tremulous, in constant motion, presented no resistance to the touch, and were always white and shining.

All the witnesses saw her with more or less distinctness, and all heard her voice, and bore testimony to its remarkable shrillness, and "inimitable" peculiarity.

Mr. Cummings' pamphlet concludes with the following summary of the manifestations.

"At first, the terror of the persons who beheld her was excited by the idea of beholding a 'ghost,' yet after a little discourse with her, their fears were entirely dissipated, and succeeded by a singular pleasure, so delightful was the mode of her address and conversation. . . .

"The spirit was always extremely disposed to piety; sang hymns, uttered prayers, exhorted, quoted Scripture, and joined with her wonderfully sweet but indescribable voice in the singing of hymns with others.

"This same voice, though inimitable, most nearly resembled her own as she was remembered when she lay dying.

"This apparition impressed all witnesses with feelings of pleasure and reverence, except in rare instances, one of which occurred at that assembly held in the cellar on the night of August 9th, when, as I have said, there were gathered some of the best of people, who conducted themselves with order and reverence; but others there were, who uttered such profanity and derision as rendered them unworthy to obtain conviction; and thereby, as the spirit afterwards declared, she could not manifest herself amongst them, so that save some knockings and a few sentences spoken, no tokens of her presence could be given.

"The spectre gave a number of extraordinary messages, of which the marriage was but one, and that a subordinate one to other ends of far superior magnitude and importance.

"These superior ends you will know hereafter, but they cannot, they must not be written." . . .

No doubt can exist that if the parties interested in these strange phenomena could have considered and investigated them with the same practiced coolness that characterizes the visitors of our modern spirit circles, most valuable and important views of spirit life, its laws and conditions, might have been gathered from such unusual opportunities for the inquiry; but amidst the fear, ignorance, and superstition which have for centuries obscured man's views of spiritual existence, it was next to impossible that even one risen from the dead should be able to bring conclusive evidence of her presence, or inform the prejudiced and bigoted concerning the true conditions of spirit life.

Still, the details of this remarkable case are too circumstantial and well attested to leave room for doubt concerning its main facts, and they unquestionably form one of the most singular and authentic evidences of direct spirit communion that the annals of history can furnish in America, prior to the great outpouring from which the modern movement of Spiritualism dates in 1848.

(To be continued.)



## SIBYLLINE LEAVES IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

### THE FOX FAMILY.

BY VESPER.

Few individuals in any age or generation will bequeath a more remarkable legacy to posterity than the family whose name stands at the head of this article.

Spiritual visitations, and phenomenal signs of spiritual presence, have been the rule rather than the exception of human experience, in some form or other, in every generation, in every country, and amongst all classes of society.

Affirmations to this effect have been so constantly reiterated by the Spiritualists, and citations, demonstrating the truth of the assertion, have been so abundantly interspersed in Spiritual literature, that it would be superfluous to offer any remarks or narrations in confirmation of such a position. What our very positive informants on these subjects have somewhat garbled in their confident assertions is, the statement that modern Spiritualism dates its system of signal communion from the Fox family, and that through their inspiration mankind has derived the astonishing disclosures that have been made concerning the spirit world, its inhabitants, and their identity with the souls of our progenitors.

The author of "Modern American Spiritualism," in her voluminous record of "a twenty years' open communion between the world of spirits and mortals," makes this same claim for the Fox family, and hazards the assertion that upon a child's discovery that the invisible rapper who disturbed the peace of the Fox family could "both see and

hear," the whole of the subsequent communion was up-reared as a superstructure upon a corner-stone. The fact is, that in our amazement at the spontaneity and breadth of the Spiritual movement since 1848, we have attributed an undue specialty to the means employed, and forgotten or overlooked the many evidences which history records, proving that the spirit world could hold communion with mortals by means of preconcerted signals on the principle of a telegraph. The history of magic, the accounts of the Sibyls furnished by the most reliable Greek and Roman authors, the ghastly records of the witchcraft persecutions, in fact every narrative of "supernatural" occurrences, wherever found, abounds with testimony of the methods employed in the communion between the visible and invisible worlds of humanity.

We need but refer to two well-marked instances of this direct communion, obtained through the modes of signaling claimed to have originated with the Fox family, at Hydesville, to show the universality of the practice, and how stupidly apathetic mankind has been in neglecting the means thus afforded for searching into nature's most profound and sublime of mysteries, namely, the science and functions of the human soul.

About the beginning of this century, the local journals in the west of England were filled with accounts of the marvelous doings of an invisible tormentor, who held possession of an old-fashioned farm-house situated at Sandford, six miles from the town of Tiverton, in the county of Devonshire, England. After a great variety of demonstrations had been made, of a character tallying closely with the ordinary doings of haunting spirits in general, attention is called to the fact that the supposed "ghost" amused itself by knocking on the under side of a table, around which it was the custom of the gentlemen of the neighborhood to assemble night after night, with a view

of what they called "laying the ghost." During these exercises, we are informed, upon the most credible testimony, that when a certain number of coins were laid on the table, the ghost, in compliance with the wish of the assembled company, would knock out correctly the exact number; again, it would discourse with questioners by signals, answering "yes," or "no," by so many knocks, and it was thus ascertained that the communicant was a female.

As we derive our information on this famous case of haunting, not only from old printed records of the time, but also from a venerable lady who was an eye-witness of the scenes as they transpired, we are in a position to affirm that "the thing," invisible as it was to those whose quiet it disturbed, could talk, see, and hear, and the proof was rendered just as conclusively as at Hydesville, some forty years later. As we have cited a modern instance, selected out of multitudes at our command, we shall follow it up with a description of an ancient form of signaling practiced both by the Greeks and Romans, and called "Dactyliomancy." The account which we are about to transcribe, is a free translation from the works of Ammianus Marcellinus. He writes thus:—

In the days of the Emperor Valens, A. D. 371, some Greek Theurgists were brought to trial for having attempted to ascertain who would succeed to the throne, by magical rites. A small table or tripod, used in their ceremonials, was brought into court, and the unhappy culprits, having been put to the torture, gave the following account of their art: 'We constructed, most venerable judges, this small, ill-omened table, which you behold, after the likeness of the Delphian Tripod, with the wood of laurel, and with solemn auspices. Having duly consecrated it by pronouncing over it words of magical power and awful potency, we succeeded, after placing our hands upon it many times, in causing it to move. Now at the time when we consulted it to learn the secrets of futurity, our manner was this: We placed the tripod in the centre of a house which had been purified throughout by Arabian incense. We then placed a round dish of various metallic substances, carefully purified and consecrated, upon it.'



“ On the circular rim of this dish the four and twenty characters of the alphabet were cut with much skill, and placed at exact distances apart. Then one clad in linen garments from head to foot, and carrying branches of the sacred laurel in his hand, having propitiated the god who makes responses, and invoked his presence in set forms, with all due gesture and reverence, sets this dish upon the tripod, and balances over it a pure gold ring, which he suspends at the end of a fine linen thread. This ring having been duly consecrated, likewise the linen thread, and both being left to hang there for a time at the pleasure of the deity of the ceremonial, presently the ring begins to dart out, and strikes at intervals the particular letters that attract it; in this way, O most venerable judges, heroic verses are recited by the moving ring, and the questions we put to the gods were answered after the mode common in the oracles, and with all the truth and inspiration due to Branchidæ. As we were then and there inquiring who should succeed the present emperor, the ring darting out had touched the letters THEOD, when some one present exclaimed that Theodorus was announced as appointed by fate. Supposing that Theodorus must be the person designed, we pursued our inquiries no further.”

Gibbon, the historian, notices this account, and adds, that the Emperor Valens, jealous of the successor thus named, strove to elude the decrees of fate by causing Theodorus to be put to death; but the person who actually did succeed to the throne was named *Theodosius*, and the fact that the real termination of his name was not given by the ring oracle, is supposed to have been a divine interposition to avert in his person the fate which befell the unlucky Theodorus.

The citations here offered are not designed to invalidate the worth of the discovery effected by little Kate Fox, nor to deprive the modern Spiritualists of any credit which they may be disposed to claim for their systematic methods of communion with the world of spirits; on the contrary, it is clear, that Greeks and Romans, Jews and Gentiles, of all ages, classes, and conditions, have been favored with opportunities of a precisely similar character to those vouchsafed to the American Spiritualists; but it is a fact that can no longer be blotted out of history or

"pooh-poohed" off by scoffing materialism, that a Yankee child of scarce nine summers led the way to the threshold of a sublime science, the clue to which philosophers, schoolmen, doctors, and sages, have been groping in vain to find for ages.

The history of the disturbances at Hydesville, and the incidents generally characterized as the "Rochester knockings," are now so familiarly known, and have so universally found their place in all modern records of the supramundane, that it would be equally tedious and irrelevant to reiterate the details of these events. We shall therefore limit our remarks to the *personnel* and influence of this singularly favored family, and introduce them severally and singly to the reader's notice as the legitimate starting-point of future biographical sketches, in which it is proposed to review the specialties of the exceptional personages who have figured in the spiritual movement.

About the time of the Hydesville disturbances, the Fox family consisted of a father, mother, and quite a numerous family of sons and daughters, most of whom were grown up and settled in life. Mr. John D. Fox, the father of the family, was a very respectable farmer, and had once owned a fine estate in Canada, where Margaretta, one of the celebrated sisters, was born.

Some reverses of fortune caused the parents to move from Canada to the western part of New York State, and subsequently to settle in the little residence at Hydesville, where the "disturbances," since so renowned, first began.

The scene of these remarkable developments is a quiet village, sparsely settled, and distant from Rochester about twenty-five miles. The house formerly occupied by the Fox family is now much changed; but when they resided there, it was a simple, unpretending frame building, con-

sisting of a few rooms on the ground floor, a cellar beneath, and a half story above the house.

Those who, like the writer, have visited the place since become so memorable, could by no stretch of the imagination or flight of fancy connect aught that was weird or occult with such plain and unassuming surroundings. There were, it is true, reports that the family of the former tenant, one Michael Weekman, had both seen and heard unaccountable things in that dwelling; but all the ordinary features of gloom and traditionary horror, which are supposed to be the concomitants of spectral hauntings, were lacking in this little country place. No groves or shadowy forest arcades are there to afford means of concealment, or suggest thoughts of evil import. A more unsensational spot it would be difficult to find, and except that the few scattered houses which constitute the village, are removed by a three or four miles' ride from the Newark Railway Station, it has not even the charm of rural solitude to stimulate the fancy of the ghost hunter. About three miles from the village resided Mr. David Fox, an elder brother of the sisters, and a married man, with children. Mr. D. Fox is a farmer by profession, and a person of most excellent reputation, gentle manners, and kind, hospitable disposition.

In the little tenement itself lived Mr. and Mrs. Fox, and their two youngest children, girls whose ages have been so differently represented that we do not feel free to make any direct statements on the subject.

The author of "Modern American Spiritualism," quoting from the affidavits of the mother, father, and neighbors present at the first investigations, represents the children as having been at the respective ages of nine and eleven years.

The family themselves state that they were some years younger. It is enough to know however that their

tender age forbids the possibility of the supposition that they could have been party to, much less have originated a system of imposture shrewd enough to baffle thousands of the keenest minds of the age, and defy the searching scrutiny of investigating committees, selected from amongst the profoundest scientists and jurists that the country could boast of.

The story of a peddler having mysteriously disappeared after spending the night with a former tenant of the house; the sudden display of wealth exhibited by the persons subsequently accused by the "rapping spirit" of being his murderer; the spectral sights and sounds that disturbed the peace of the tenants of the house; all these circumstances, together with the details of the events which transpired in connection with this occult narrative, are too fully recorded in Hardinge's "History of Modern American Spiritualism," to need more than a passing notice here. The person who immediately preceded the Fox family in the occupancy of the haunted dwelling, Mr. Michael Weekman, although disturbed by many preternatural sights and sounds, lacked the courage or the acumen necessary to analyze their nature, or else he was not deemed the fitting instrument to outwork the stupendous results of which they were but the "John Baptists."

The two little Fox children, Margaretta and Catherine, were evidently organized with the peculiar force necessary to form the required spiritual battery.

The sounds during their residence in the house were loud, incessant, and varied, with signs and tokens of a terrible presence recalling an act of secret murder. The 31st day of March, now held sacred as the most memorable of anniversaries by the Spiritualists of America, saw the first spirit circle on earth gathered together round the bed of the little children; and subsequently, when they were removed on that same night from the house, the

circle increased from the first few neighbors called in to an assemblage of all the near residents, attracted to the place by the report that the hauntings which had for some months previous become notorious, were at last discovered to have been produced by the spirit of a murdered peddler.

We cannot here forbear from calling attention to two circumstances which should have peremptorily exempted the Foxes from the slanderous and inapplicable suspicions of imposture that were so often launched against them. The first of these was, that on the night of the 31st of March, when the inhabitants of the village had, in great numbers, full possession of Mr. Fox's house, and the sounds were proceeding with great force, and rendering intelligent answers to all querists, the whole of the Fox family were absent, having quitted the distracting scene, and taken refuge with one of their neighbors. And the next point, in evidence of their complete exculpation, is the vigorous and exhaustive researches that were made in every nook and corner, and beneath every plank, stone, or scrap of mortar that constituted the simple dwelling; and all this time the raps were sounding out vigorously, and all this search ended without the discovery of a single earthly cause which could account for them. The Fox family continued some months at Hydesville, enduring a perfect storm of insult, persecution, and slander, from the multitudes who flocked to their house as much from curiosity to hear the strange sounds, as from a malicious desire to torture and annoy the unfortunate subjects of them.

At length they removed to Rochester, where a married daughter, Mrs. Fish (*née* Leah Fox), soon afterwards became, like her young sisters, a powerful medium for the sounds. It is enough here to add that the poor children, Margaretta and Kate, were made the subjects of the most

rigid scrutiny to which any persons in a modern age and civilized community were ever subjected. Besides three nights of public exhibition at Corinthian Hall, Rochester, at which three several committees, chosen by the citizens from amongst themselves, reported in favor of the spiritual hypothesis, and emphatically repudiated the possibility of imposture, the sisters were often examined by committees of ladies to ascertain that no detonating instruments were concealed in their clothing. They travelled for several years from city to city, submitting patiently and frankly to all sorts of so-called "scientific" experiments, standing on glass tumblers, tied up in silk bags, placed on feathers, and more than once half immersed in tanks of water, for the purpose of ascertaining how far electrical conditions could affect the sounds.

That surrounding mental conditions, and the vital magnetic states of others, could exert most important influences on the production of the manifestations, has been proved beyond the power of dispute, but it has never yet been shown that material substances affected them one way or the other.

In the prosecution of their mediumistic labors during a period of over twenty-four years, it may well be supposed, the Fox family have witnessed experiences unparalleled in history, and only equaled by the martyrdoms of the dark ages for the amount of persecution, slander, and even danger that they have endured.

Their custom was to go to some of the principal cities of the Union, hire rooms at one of the chief hotels, advertise their presence, and sit at stated hours for séances, at which the public were admitted on payment of the required fees. Now a close observation of the conduct of the numerous investigators who have witnessed their demonstrations, leads the writer to conclude that if these mediums had been so circumstanced as to have been able to admit their

investigators free of charge, not one word of suspicion on the genuine character of their manifestations would have been breathed against them; but as they had to pay railway fares, hotel bills, and other expenses incident to the outward demands of human life; as they had given up every other means of earning a livelihood but that of charging a modest fee for their time and service, so they were instantly set down as impostors and deluders, and all their toil, anguish of mind, loss of reputation, health, time, and domestic privacy, were assumed to have been sacrificed for the sake of the hazardous and often insufficient subsistence their life martyrdom procured for them. Their true histories as public persons, the incidents of their early developments, sufferings, trials, and dangers, have been placed so fully before the world, that we shall content ourselves by adding only a few particulars concerning their personal appearance and the specialties which may be expected to distinguish such exceptional persons. The good father and mother — now passed to their happy rest — were a pious and exemplary couple.

Many are the veteran Spiritualists of New York and other cities who still remember the kind, motherly face of Mrs. Fox, with her patient, gentle expression, sad, sweet smile, and the fringe of snowy hair which bordered her thoughtful brow, a snow that had silvered that venerable head in the agonizing fear and torment of only one single week spent in the possessed house at Hydesville. The writer of this article has met and conversed with a quiet, unobtrusive little old gentleman, a member of the Temperance League, and a good Methodist, who some twelve years ago spent an evening in his company; and though speaking little, and that in a mild and somewhat timid way, became an object of interest to all assembled, from the fact that he was the father of the celebrated "Fox girls."

The eldest of the three sisters who became so famed as mediums for the rappings, etc., was at one time the subject of the most powerful manifestations produced amongst them.

For several years she resided in New York, and it has been estimated, by one who deems he has ample testimony for the figures rendered, that she must have sat during her public mediumship, for over twenty thousand inquirers.

Besides the methods of communicating with spirits through the raps alphabetically sounded, and spelling out long communications, this lady, like her younger sisters, was favored with a great variety of manifestations generally called "physical force." Illuminated figures have been seen to come and go in her presence. Lights of various sizes, forms, and colors, have filled her circle rooms. Every description of object, large and small, has been carried hither and thither. Every variety of sound, from the sawing of planks to the terrible phenomena of a storm at sea, or the horrors of the battlefield, have been faithfully delineated through her mediumship.

Miss Leah Fox, afterwards Mrs. Fish, of Rochester, now Mrs. Underhill, of New York, is at present fortunately removed by her husband's position and wealth from the terrible trials which formerly beset her as a public medium. Miss Katy Fox's powers have been more widely called forth than those of either of her sisters; her position having been, and still continuing, those of a medium for the world at large. Some of her most remarkable experiences occurred during the time that she was engaged by Horace H. Day, Esq., of New York, to give free public sittings at a circle-room, which the liberality of that gentleman sustained entirely at his own expense for some years.

Here Miss Fox was visited by thousands of eagerly in-



quiring minds, and though the phenomena produced in these sittings were chiefly confined to tests of personal identity, and messages spelt out by loving spirits to their earthly friends, it may be calculated that through these means, hundreds of minds, hitherto blind to the light of immortality, have been gladdened by its realization, and multitudes of bereaved mourners have entered that young lady's presence, to leave it rejoicing in reunion with their beloved dead. Very marvelous accounts of phenomena have been published concerning the substantiality and vivid apparition of the spirits who manifested through Miss Kate Fox's mediumship, in the presence of two gentlemen of New York, eminent for their high characters and social standing; but as these narratives have been so fully detailed in other publications, it would be supererogatory to repeat them here.

In a book which has recently appeared in New York, entitled "The Love Life of Dr. Kane," a series of letters are given, addressed by that eminent gentleman to Miss Margaretta Fox, and published by her and her friends, with a view of substantiating her claim to be recognized as the wife of Dr. Kane, and to receive from his family the dower which would accrue to her as his widow.

The general opinions of the world on this subject, as well as a fair description of one or two episodes in the life of Margaretta Fox, may not unaptly be gathered from an article on her return to Rochester, in 1867, to resume her profession as a public medium. The excerpt is taken from the *Rochester Express* of April 29th, 1867:—

#### SPIRITUALISM.

##### RETURN OF MARGARETTA FOX TO ROCHESTER.

We learn that one of the original "Fox girls," who in 1848-50 visited this city, and by or through whom the strange and inexplicable manifestations called "spirit rappings" and "Rochester knockings" were made,

has returned here, and intends to afford those who desire to hear the remarkable sounds, which formerly created a profound excitement throughout the country, an opportunity of doing so.

Margaretta — now here — while in Philadelphia in 1852, giving public "manifestations," met the late Dr. Eliza Kent Kane, the great Arctic explorer, and a reciprocal attachment sprang up between them, which finally led to a promise of marriage, which does not appear to have been solemnized by any religious ceremony, but the relation was acknowledged in letters written to her by Dr. Kane. The claim of Margaretta to be regarded as the widow of the deceased explorer, has been subjected to a legal test, which is not yet decided. In self-defense she has published a volume of letters received from the Doctor, in which he gives expression to his affection in the most tender terms of endearment, and addresses her as his "wife." This book is for sale at the bookstores, but we believe that the lady and her friends would rather prefer to withdraw it than seek to give it a wider circulation. After her engagement to Dr. Kane (by whom she was placed at school during his absence on his grand and last expedition to the Arctic seas), and at his request, she has desisted from the exercise of mediumship in public. But while residing recently with a sister in Canada, the rappings recommenced, and her return to this city to resume the public manifestations was imposed by the persistent commands of the invisible agents. In obedience to this, and upon a release from the obligation given to the Doctor, by the same means, she appears here. We shall probably be able to announce her further movements, if the design is carried out.

In 1858, Margaretta joined the Catholic Church, and her public profession of faith in its doctrines occasioned much comment, and not a little denunciation from many of the Spiritualists, who deemed her opportunities for communion with the spirit world should have shielded her from the tendency to put herself into the bondage which priestly authority must henceforth exercise over her mind. It should be remembered, however, in reviewing this remarkable step, that the faith of Dr. Kane was professedly adverse to the Spiritual hypothesis.

Warm as are the expressions of attachment contained in his published letters, they continually reaffirm his skepticism in spiritual communion, and his abhorrence of the idea that spirits were the source of Miss Fox's strange en-

dowments. In many instances he hesitates not to imply that her "gifts" were nothing more than "deception," and though it is unreasonable to suppose he could have cherished a sincere affection for a person whom he knew to be guilty of so foul and monstrous a wickedness as fraud, in the most sacred of all subjects, it seems plausible to believe that he avowed these sentiments to pique her into a renunciation of her faith, and a promise to discontinue her vocation as what he contemptuously termed a "spirit rapper."

The unbounded influence which the brilliant and popular navigator obtained over the plastic mind of the poor young medium, is demonstrated in every line of their curious correspondence.

He succeeded in obtaining her solemn pledge not to practice her mediumship, and even to avoid some of her near connections who were engaged in mediumistic labors; to eschew the company of the Spiritualists, and spend the weary months of his absence in his last Arctic expedition in scholastic pursuits, conducted by a talented lady, for whose services, as Miss Fox's preceptress, Dr. Kane paid with princely liberality. How far family influence, or the tempting fiend of expediency, governed his conduct towards Miss Fox, it is needless now to inquire. Enough that she devoted a few brief years of her strange life to him, and that a mixture of the most chivalric tenderness and faltering purpose marked his treatment of the soul thus committed to his charge. Sad and deplorable results most commonly ensue from mistakes which, however slight in their enactment, too often color a life commenced under their inauspicious influence. Margaretta Fox, left alone, without even the halting protection which her betrothed extended to her, when he passed away in the prime of his early manhood, — Margaretta Fox, with a desolate heart, and tastes cultivated far above the station she was in

future destined to occupy, like a waif cast on the ocean of life, without rudder, compass, or pilot, fled, like a wounded hart, to the shelter of the Roman Church, and sought compensation in the extended arms of that *holy mother* for the staff and strength that was broken with the cord of her lover's life. Whatever she has been since, or may become hereafter, Margaretta Fox in a measure may attribute to the *fostering care and pious influences* of the religion which she has adopted, and the teachings of the *saintly men* upon whose counsels she relies for strength and guidance in her bereavement and isolation.

*Let us hope that the holy mother Church and her reverend ministers* will have a faithful account to render of their charge over the soul of poor Margaretta.

In closing this brief sketch of persons, the influence of whose singular endowments have made a mark upon the world which will never be erased, let us observe that all attempts at statistical information fail when we seek to enumerate the thousands and tens of thousands whom they have been the means of enlightening on the hitherto insoluble problem of life beyond the grave. But it is more in the direction of quality of mind than numerical force that these wonderful mediums have been instrumental in revolutionizing their age.

Legislators, magistrates, judges, doctors, lawyers, editors, poets, novelists, essayists, scholars of every degree, and men and women whose celebrated names are warranty for their vast spheres of influence, have crowded the séances of the Fox family, and if all have not rendered in their public acknowledgment of allegiance to Spiritualism, quite a sufficient number have done so to confound the slanderer and astonish the skeptical.

To transcribe a record of their circles, describe their travels, or give accounts of the noteworthy communications, tests, and phenomena procured by celebrated per-

sonages no less than undistinguished multitudes, would occupy the pages of several volumes; and yet two of these modern Sibyls have only just attained the meridian of earth life, and the third has scarcely passed it.

What a history is theirs to hand down to posterity! what a way-mark will their names become on the annals of the recording angel of eternity! They are no saints or subjects for idolatrous worship in their private lives. Selected as mere children for the special uses their physical organisms could supply, they have been for years past dragged before an unsympathetic and often antagonistic public as targets for ribaldry, insolence, scorn, and denunciation. Fêted, petted, and exalted beyond all power of self-control by their admirers, pelted with moral mud and libelous filth by their enemies, what evenly balanced qualities of mind or heart ought to be demanded from persons thus trained, and with impressible natures thus oscillating between the wildest extremes of good and evil influences?

That a kind heavenly Father will receive them at last into his rest, that their guardian angels will plead for them with far more justice, mercy, and truth than a harshly judging world, those who are in the understanding of spiritual things, full well know. The patience, candor, and purity of conduct which marked their days of extreme youth, and extreme trial, might have been measurably due to the angelic guardianship of a most exemplary mother; but had they failed in a thousand of the demands which an ignorant world makes upon the spirit medium, the truly spiritual student might have found all-sufficient excuses in their stormy lives, and the fact that the spirit medium's extreme susceptibility and liability to succumb to every surrounding influence, good and bad, is the very element which constitutes the subject a good wire for the spiritual telegraph.

In person, the Fox sisters are all more or less attractive. The eldest, Mrs. Underhill, might pass for a merry-looking Spanish gypsy. The expression of Katy Fox's face is sad and appealing, whilst the classical contour of her strongly marked features reminds the beholder of the ancient Sibyl. Margaretta's early youth was graced with a charming face and a highly spiritualized expression.

The manner of all these ladies is modest, unassuming, and sufficiently polished by intercourse with the best society to render them attractive and pleasing. We shall conclude our sketch with one or two specimens of the communications rapped out, letter by letter, through the alphabet, at some of Mrs. Underhill's sances.

On the evening of June 5th, 1862, a small company being assembled at the residence of Mr. D. Underhill, in New York city, a circle was proposed with a view of questioning the controlling spirits of those present, what would be the issue of the tremendous struggle then raging between the contending armies of the North and South. After some unusually powerful demonstrations, consisting of the sounds of marching, firing, the clashing of swords, rolling of drums, and other exciting phenomena, significant of a warlike contest, the following communications were spelled out letter by letter:—

“There must be some desperate struggles before the Union army can hold the rebellion under control; then many treacheries will be perpetrated through the semblance of peace, after which many new and arbitrary enforcements will be carried into effect, so that the difficulties cannot be determined for some time. Rebellion is among you everywhere, and the only curb is the law and right to control. Even your leading journalists are not reliable; their loyalty is speculative.

“I have spoken.

RED JACKET.”

“No more peace; no more love; no more truth; all is gone; my spirit sorrow, my light grow dark, my hope fail, and my form no more appear on earth among my tribe; my feather gone, my axe dull, my arrow broke, and my hand no more pull the string; my eye no more take

aim, my work to do and I no power. Great Spirit make pale-face look up where help can come, and then we will fly through air in cars of fire to call the light and heat down, to wake up the Love, Hope, Charity, and Faith, which has no power now to conquer in the war of envy, hatred, and rebellion.

"I have spoken.

WAR EAGLE."

It was on the Sunday evening of Feb. 4th, 1863, that the spirit of Charles Horn, the celebrated composer, author of the "Deep, Deep Sea," "I Know a Bank," and numerous other musical works, the merit and memory of which will never become old to the true dilettanti, announced his name, and expressed his wish to say a few words to a lady present who had formerly been a pupil of his, a circumstance wholly unknown to any one of the company but the lady herself.

After some kindly greetings of a personal character, the spirit spelled out the following answers to questions.

Q. Why do you come here this evening, old friend?

A. To greet you, child, and renew the pleasant acquaintance we formerly enjoyed on earth. The immortal ever remembers his human attachments, and rejoices in the opportunity of manifesting them.

Q. Did you know this family, or ever meet the Foxes before to-night?

A. I am well acquainted with them, dear Emma. Their mediumship pointed me on the path to heaven, and through them I learned the realities of life beyond the grave.

Q. You knew them, then, before you died?

A. I did.

Q. But did you *die*? I thought the spirits did not believe in death.

A. Emma, I really *died*. The change which my spirit endured in quitting my body was an actual death. Yes, I slept the sleep of death, and dreamed of joy and sorrow, happiness and woe; of the long, long ago; of changes,

disappointments, and friends on earth once dear, but long since forgotten. All life's panoramic forms and images returned to me in that long sleep of death like the open page of the judgment angel's book of doom. . . .

I might have slept till now, had not a sweet self-sacrificing soul put on a robe of sombre hue suited to the darkness in which I lay, and descending from the realms of light in which He dwells, drew me by the cords of love and pity from my troubled sleep, and led my spirit up through scenes of progressive effort to happiness and advancement.

*Q.* Who was that pitying angel?

*A.* Jesus of Nazareth, the "friend of publicans and sinners."

To some remarks which were here made in the circle questioning the identity of the spirit with one whom some doubted to have ever had an historical existence at all, the communicating intelligence replied:—

"I testify to the existence of Jesus the martyr of Jerusalem, who was born, lived, and died amongst men; the great teacher of the religion of love."





# "GHOST LAND;" OR, RESEARCHES INTO THE MYSTERIES OF SPIRITUAL EXISTENCE.

BY AUSTRIA.

NO. I.

THE series of papers of which the first number will be found in the following pages, are the contributions of a gentleman whose high rank in society is a less favorable warrant for his strict fidelity to truth, than the pure and unimpeachable character which he has earned from his fellow-men amongst whom he has moved in many public positions of honorable distinction during the last fifty years. In private circles, and amongst the near friends and kindred by whom he is most intimately known, the occult character of his studies, and the untiring energy with which he has pursued his researches into the mystic realms of Spiritual existence, seem to have enshrouded his real nature with a pall of gloom and distance, which no one seemed able to penetrate or overcome.

The translator of these papers has long enjoyed the privilege of a personal acquaintance with their gifted author, and assures us that despite the extreme amiability of his manners, the generosity of his disposition, and his high scholarly attainments, his family regard him with a mixture of awe and pity which tend to deepen the singular isolation in which his peculiar experiences have plunged him.

One of them, an elderly maiden lady of high rank, and an occasional attendant on the person of the late Empress of Austria, assured the translator that "every one of true piety and Christian principle," regarded her unfortunate brother as sold to the *Evil one*, and, Faust-like, deemed that he had bartered away his soul for the possession of that fatal and pernicious knowledge which none but angels good or evil could communicate to mortals. Her ladyship added that as it was a well understood fact, that good angels had never communicated with earth since the days of the blessed disciples, and the Christian religion taught that all communion with spirits, demons, departed souls, etc., etc., was unlawful and impious; so the only hypothesis which could account for the strange revelations by sight and other methods which had been vouchsafed to her brother, was to admit that this was the thousand years

during which Satan, the adversary of mankind, was to remain unbound, and that, being at large, having power to tempt, and subtilty to deceive even the very elect, he and his arch fiends, attracted by her brother's insatiate thirst for unlawful knowledge, had contracted to satisfy his curiosity at the expense of his immortal soul. It must be added that the worthy lady made these admissions only to an intimate friend of her family, and accompanied them with tears of genuine sorrow. It is also noteworthy that none of the author's friends or kindred ever threw a shadow of suspicion over the credibility of his statements, neither did they question the sincerity of the many distinguished authorities referred to in his narrations. Firmly relying on the unimpeachable veracity of their relative's character, his testimony was to them gospel truth; only they adopted their own methods of explaining the phenomena which from time to time he detailed to them, and as the views of these excellent persons tally so closely with those affirmed by certain reverend divines much nearer home than Austria, it may be safe to infer that one of the Christian modes of explaining Spiritualism is to assume, that all the spirits that appeared in Judea were angelic, and all that have manifested in any other country were demoniac; that all the mediums that figured in Judea from eighteen to twenty centuries ago (Balaam and his animal, Samson and David included), were children of God, and all the mediums that have lived since (Martin Luther, John Wesley, Pastor Oberlin, and Kate Fox included) were children of — *the other party*. Whilst citing the opinions of those most nearly connected with our honored contributor, however, we have abundant reason for commending his papers to the perusal of every student into the mysteries of Spiritual existence, with the added assurance that honesty, candor, and strict integrity underlie every statement which he puts forth. We have only further to premise that the translator of the writings being an Americanized German, claims to have performed his task of rendering the writer's meaning into English with all the fidelity that the idioms of the two languages will admit of.

— EDITOR WESTERN STAR.

SHOULD the student of Spiritual mysteries in future ages ever condescend to cast his eyes over the humble pages I am now writing, he will assuredly have progressed so far beyond me in the experience of all that I have held as marvelous or worthy of record, that he will not care to inquire who was their author, where he was born, how nurtured, or how he came to stray so far from the faith of his fathers as to be a total unbeliever at the early age

of eighteen years, in all the affirmations of what is termed "revealed religion."

To any readers who may honor me with their notice in my own time, the truths I shall have to relate are so fully susceptible of verification that they need no indorsement from the addition of names, titles, family trees, or pedigrees. The sorrowing hearts of a well beloved wife and two most amiable ladies who call me father, have been too often bowed down beneath the weight of what they are pleased to term my "stupendous heresies," for me to add one rose-leaf's weight to their burden of bitterness; hence the peculiar experiences which I have come to regard as a talent committed to my care for the warning and encouragement of the world, need not be so heralded as to pierce any deeper into the hearts of my beloved ones by identifying the student of the magical with their husband and father.

Let my readers then follow the footsteps of an anonymous narrator into a retrospect of my researches; they will neither lose nor gain by the addition of any other title than that of the humble student "Austria."

I was about twelve years of age, as well as I can remember, when, returning one day late in the afternoon from the academy I attended at Berlin, just as I was about to enter the gate of the house where I boarded, I felt a hand laid on my shoulder, and looking round, I saw myself confronted with one of my teachers, a man who, during the period of my ten months' study in that place, had exerted a singular and irresistible influence over me. He was a professor of Oriental languages, and though I had not been regularly entered in his class, I had joined it because he one day suddenly asked me to do so, and I as suddenly felt impelled to accept his offer. From the very moment that I entered Professor Marx's class, I became absorbed in the study of Eastern literature, and the pro-

iciency I made was doubtless owing to my desire to master the subjects to which these Oriental tongues formed the key. On the morning of the day from which I commence my narrative, Professor Marx had abruptly asked me if I were a dreamer; I replied in the negative, adding that I thought I often dreamed something; but the memory of what it might be only remained with me on awaking sufficiently long to impress me with the opinion that I had been somewhere in my sleep, but had forgotten where. When the professor touched me on the shoulder, as above mentioned, at my own doorstep, he said, —

"Louis, my boy, how would you like to have some dreams that you could remember, and go to places in your sleep from which you should return and give accounts of?"

"O, professor!" I exclaimed, in astonishment, "could I do this, and how?"

"Come with me, boy," replied my teacher. "I belong to a philosophical society, the existence or at least the real nature of which is but little known. We want the aid of a good smart lad, like you, especially one who is not a conscious dreamer. I have long had my eye upon you, and I think I can not only trust you with our secrets, but, by making you a partaker of them, instruct you in lore of great wisdom, which few children of your age would be thought worthy to know."

Flattered by this confidence, and more than usually thrilled with the strange shivering which always seemed to follow the touch of the professor's hand, I suffered myself to be led on until I reached with him the fourth story of a large house in a very quiet part of the city, where I was speedily introduced into an apartment of spacious dimensions, parted off by screens and curtains into many subdivisions, and half filled with an assemblage of gentlemen, several of whom, to my surprise, I recognized as be-

longing to the academy, some to the neighboring college, and two others as members of one of the princely families of Germany.

There was an air of mystery and caution attending our entrance into this place, and my subsequent introduction to the company, which inclined me to believe that this was a meeting of one of those secret societies that, young as I was, I knew to have been strictly forbidden by the government; hence the idea that I was making one of an illegal gathering impressed me with a sentiment of fear, and a restless desire to be gone. Apparently these unexpressed feelings were understood by my teacher, for he addressed me in a low voice, assuring me that I was in the society of gentlemen of honor and respectability, that my presence there had only been solicited to assist them in certain philosophical experiments they were conducting, and that I should soon find cause to congratulate myself that I had been so highly favored as to be inducted into their association.

Whilst he spoke, the professor laid his hand on my head, and continued to hold it there, at first with a seemingly slight and accidental pressure; but ere he had concluded his address, the weight of that hand appeared to me to increase to an almost unendurable extent. Like a mountain bearing down upon my shoulders, columns of fiery, cloud-like matter seemed to stream from the professor's fingers, enter my whole being, and finally crush me down beneath their terrific force into a state where resistance, appeal, or even speech was impossible. A vague feeling that death was upon me filled my bewildered brain, and a sensation of an undefinable yearning to escape from a certain thralldom in which I believed myself to be held oppressed me with agonizing force. At length it seemed as if this intense longing for liberation was gratified. I stood, and seemed to myself to stand,

free of the professor's crushing hand ; free of my weary, weary body ; free of every clog or chain, but an invisible and yet quite tangible cord which connected me with the form I had worn, but which now, like a garment I had put off, lay sleeping in an easy chair beneath me. As for my real self, I stood balanced in air, as I thought at first, about four feet above and a little on one side of my slumbering mortal envelope ; presently, however, I perceived that I was treading on a beautiful crystalline form of matter, pure and transparent, and hard as a diamond, but sparkling, bright, luminous, and ethereal. There was a wonderful atmosphere, too, surrounding me on all sides. Above and about me, it was discernible as a radiant, sparkling mist, enclosing my form, piercing the walls and ceiling, and permitting my vision to take in an almost illimitable area of space, including the city, fields, plains, mountains, and scenery, together with the firmament above my head, spangled with stars, and irradiated by the soft beams of the tranquil moon. All this vast realm of perception opened up before me in despite of the inclosing walls, ceiling, and other obstacles of matter which surrounded me. These were obstacles no more. I saw through them as if they had been thin air ; and what is more, I knew I could not only pass through them with perfect ease, but that any piece of ponderable matter in the apartment, the very furniture itself, if it were only brought into the solvent of the radiant fire mist that surrounded me, would dissolve and become like me and like my atmosphere, so soluble that it could pass, just as I could, through everything material. I saw, or seemed to see, that I was now *all force*. That I was soul loosed from the body save by the invisible cord which connected me with it ; also, that I was in the realm of soul, the soul of matter ; and that as my soul, and the soul-realm in which I had now entered was the real force which kept

matter together, so that I could just as easily break the atoms apart and pass through them, as one can put a solid body into the midst of water or air.

Suddenly it seemed to me that I would try this newly-discovered power, and observing that the college cap I had worn on my poor lifeless body's head, was lying idly in the hands, I made an effort to reach it. To succeed, however, I found I must come into contact with a singular kind of blue vapor which for the first time I noticed to be issuing from my body, and surrounding it like a second self.

Whilst I was gazing at this curious phenomenon, I felt impressed to look at the other persons in the room, and I then observed that a similar aura or luminous second self issued from every one of them. The color and density of each one varied, and by carefully regarding the nature of these mists, or as I have since learned to call them "photospheres," I could correctly discern the character, motives, and past lives of the individuals.

I became so deeply absorbed in tracing the images, shapes, scenes, and revelations, that were depicted on these men's souls, that I forgot my design of appropriating the cap I had worn, until I noticed that the emanations of Professor Marx, assuming the hue of a shining rose tint, seemed to permeate and commingle with the bluish vapor that issued from my form. I noticed then another phenomenon. When the two vapors or photospheres were thoroughly commingled; they too became force, like my soul, and like the realm of soul in which I was standing. To *perceive*, in the state into which I was inducted, was to see, hear, taste, smell, and understand all things in one new sense. I knew that as a mortal I could not use more than one or two of the senses at a time, but as a soul, I could realize all sensations through one master sense, perception; also, that this sublime and exalted sixth sense



informed me of far more than all which the other senses separately could have done. Suddenly a feeling of triumph possessed me at the idea of knowing and understanding so much more than the grave and learned professors into whose company I had entered as a timid shrinking lad, but whom I now regarded with contempt, because their knowledge was so inferior to mine, and pity, because they could not conceive of the new functions and consequent enjoyments that I experienced as a liberated soul.

There was another revelation impressed upon me at that time, and one which subsequent experiences have quickened into stupendous depths of consciousness. It was this: I saw, as I have before stated, upon my companions in distinct and vivid characters, the events of their past lives, and the motives which had prompted them to their acts. Now it became to me clear as sunlight that one set of motives were wrong, and another right; and that one set of ~~actions~~ actions (those prompted by wrong motives, I mean) produced horrible deformities and loathsome appearances on the photosphere, whilst the other set of actions (prompted by the motives which I at once detected as right) seemed to illuminate the soul emotions with indescribable brightness, and cast a halo of such beauty and radiance over the whole being, that one old man in particular, who was of a singularly uncomely and withered appearance, as a mortal, shone as a soul, in the light of his noble life and glorious emanations, like a perfect angel. I could now write a folio volume on the interior disclosures which are revealed to the soul's eye, and which are hidden away or unknown to the bodily senses. I cannot pause upon them now, though I think it would be well if we would write many books on this subject, provided man would read and believe them. In that case, I feel confident, human beings would shrink back aghast

and terror-stricken from crime, or even from bad thoughts, so hideous do they show upon the soul, and so full of torment and pain does the photosphere become that is charged with evil. I saw in one very fine gentleman's photosphere, the representation of all sorts of the most foul and disgusting reptiles. These images seemed to form, as it were, out of his misty emanations, whilst upon his soul I perceived sores and frightful marks that convinced me he was not only a libertine and a sensualist, but a man imbued with many base and repulsive traits of character.

What I saw that night made me afraid of crime; afraid to cherish bad thoughts, or harbor bad motives, and with all my faults and shortcomings in after life, I have never forgotten, or ceased to try and live out, the awful lessons of warning I then learned. I must here state that what may have taken me some fifteen minutes or more to write, flashed upon my perceptions nearly all at once, and its comprehension, in much fuller detail than I have here given, could not have occupied more than a few seconds of time to arrive at.

By this time, that on which I now write, "clairvoyance," as the soul's perceptions are called, has become too common a faculty to interest the world much by its elaborate description. Fifty or sixty years ago, it was too much of a marvel to obtain general credit; but I question whether those who then watched its powers and properties, did not study them with more profound appreciation and understanding than they do now, when it seems to be a gift cultivated for very little use, beyond that of affording a means of livelihood, and too frequently opens up opportunities of deception for the quack doctor or pretended fortune teller. But to resume my narrative.

I had not been long free from the fetters of my sleeping body and the professor's magical hand, when he bent down over my form and said, —

"Louis, I WILL you to remember all that transpires in the mesmeric sleep; also, I desire that you should speak, and relate to us, as far as you can, all that you now see and hear."

In an instant the wish of my childish life, the one incessant yearning that possessed my waking hours, returned to me, namely, the desire to behold my dearly loved mother, from whom I had been separated for the past two years. This dear lady, a native of Austria, had accompanied my father, an Englishman, and an officer in the East India Company's service, to Bombay. There she had resided for the two years of our sad separation, whilst I had been placed under the charge of her relatives, to complete my education in Germany. With the flash of my mother's image across my mind, I seemed to be transported swiftly across an immense waste of waters, to behold a great city where strange-looking buildings were discernible, and where huge domes covered with brilliant metals, flashed in a burning tropical sun. Whirled through space, a thousand new and wondrous sights gleamed a moment before my eyes, then vanished. Then I found myself standing beneath the shade of a group of tall palm-trees, gazing upon a beautiful lady who lay stretched upon a couch, shaded by the broad verandah of a stately bungalow, whilst half a dozen dusky figures, robed in white, with bands of gold around their bare arms and ankles, waved immense fans over her, and seemed to be busy in ministering to her refreshment. "Mother, mother!" I cried, extending my arms towards the well-known image of the being dearest to me on earth. As I spoke, I could see that my voice caused no vibration in the air that surrounded my mother's couch, still the impression produced by my earnest will affected her. I saw a light play around her head, which, strange to relate, assumed my exact form, shape, and attitude, only that it

was a singularly *petite* miniature resemblance. As it flickered over the sensorium, she raised her eyes from her book, and fixing them upon the exact point in space where I stood, murmured, in a voice that seemed indescribably distant, "My Louis! my poor, far-away, deserted child! would I could see thee now."

At this moment the will of my magnetizer seemed to intervene between me and my unexpected vision.

I caught his voice saying in stern tones, "Do not interfere, Herr Eschenmayer. I do not wish him to see his mother, and the tidings he could bring from her would not interest us."

Some one replied; for I felt that the professor listened, though for some cause unknown to me then, I could not hear any voice but his. Again he spoke, and said, "I wish him to visit our society at Hamburgh, and bring us some intelligence of what they are doing there." As the words were uttered, I saw for one brief second of time my mother's form, the couch whereon she lay, the verandah, bungalow, and all the objects that surrounded her, turn upside down, like forms seen in a reversed mirror, and then the whole scene changed. Cities, villages, roads, mountains, valleys, oceans, flitted before my gaze, crowding up their representation in a single instant of time, and ending their panoramic delineation in a large and splendidly furnished chamber, not unlike the one I had entered with the professor.

I perceived that I was at Hamburgh, in the house of the Baron von S., and that he and a party of gentlemen were seated around a table on which were drinking cups, each filled with some hot, ruby-colored liquid, from which a fragrant, herb-like odor was exhaled. Several crystal globes were on the table, also some plates of dark shining surfaces, together with a number of open books, some in print, others in MS., and others again whose pages were

covered with characters of an antique form, and highly illuminated. As I entered, or seemed borne into this apartment, a voice exclaimed, "A messenger from Herr Marx is here, a 'flying soul,' one who will carry the promised word to our circle in Berlin."

"Question him," responded another voice. "What tidings or message does he bring?"

"He is a new recruit; no adept in the sublime sciences," responded the first speaker, "and cannot be depended on."

"Let me speak with him," broke in a voice of singularly sweet tone and accent; and thereupon I became able to fix my perceptive sense so clearly on this last speaker, that I fully realized who and what he was, and how situated. I observed that he stood immediately beneath a large mirror suspended against the wall, and set in a circular frame covered with strange and cabalistic looking characters. A dark velvet curtain was undrawn and parted on either side of the mirror, and in or on, I cannot tell which, its black and highly polished surface, I saw a minature form of a being robed in starry garments, with a glittering crown on its head, long tresses of golden hair, shining as sunbeams, streaming down its shoulders, and a face of the most unparalleled loveliness my eyes had then or have ever since beheld. I cannot tell whether this creature or image was designed to represent a male or female. I did not then know, and may not now say whether it was an animate or inanimate being. It seemed to be living, and its beautiful lips moved as if speaking. An expression of the most heart-felt sorrow, grief, despair, utter hopelessness, seemed to pervade the countenance, and its strangely gleaming, sad eyes, were fixed with an indescribable expression of pity upon me.

Several voices, with the tones of little children, though

I saw none present, said, in a clear choral accent, "The crowned angel speaks. Listen!" The lips of the figure in the mirror then seemed to move. A long beam of light extended from them to the lips of the fine, noble-looking youth of about eighteen, who stood beneath the mirror; and who pronounced, in the voice I had last heard, these words:—

"Tell Felix von Marx, he and his companions are searching in vain. They spend their time in idle efforts to confirm a myth, and will only reap the bitter fruits of disappointment and mockery. The soul of man is compounded from the aërial life of elementary spirits, and, like the founders and authors of its being, only sustains an individualized life so long as the vehicle of the soul holds together and remains intact. If the spirits of the elements, stars, and worlds, have been unable during countless ages to discover the secret of eternal being, shall such a mere vaporous compound of their exhaled essence as the soul of man, achieve the aim denied to them? Go to, presumptuous ones! Life is a transitory condition of combinations; death a final state of dissolution. Being is an eternal alternation between these changes, and individuality is the privilege of the soul once only in eternity! Look upon my earthly companion! look well, and describe him, so that the employers who have sent you shall know that the crowned angel has spoken."

I looked as directed, and noticed that the young man who spoke, or seemed to speak, in rhythmic harmony with the image in the mirror, wore a fantastic masquerade dress, different from all the other persons present. He on his part seemed moved with the desire that those around him should become aware of my presence, as he was. Then I noticed that his eyes looked intelligently into mine, as if he saw and recognized me; but the gaze

of all the rest of the company met mine as if they looked on vacancy. They could not see me.

"Flying soul," said the youth, authoritatively addressing me, "can you not give us the usual signal?" Instantly I remarked that dim shadowy forms, like half erased photographic images, were fixed in the air and about the apartment, and I saw that they were forms composed of the essences of souls that, like mine, had visited that chamber, and like mine had left their tracery behind. With the pictures thus presented, however, I understood the nature of the signals they had given, and what was now demanded of me. I willed instinctively a strong breath or life essence to pass from myself to the young man, also I noticed that his photosphere was of the same rosy tint as Professor Marx's.

I saw the blue vapor from my form exhale like a cloud by my will, commingle with his photosphere, and precipitate itself toward his finger ends, feet, hair, beard, and eyelashes.

He laid his hand on a small tripod of different kinds of metal which stood near him, and, by the direction of my will, five showers of the life essence were discharged from his fingers, sounding like clear, distinct detonations, through the apartment.

All present started; and one voice remarked, "The messenger has been here!"

"And gone!" added the youth, when instantly I sunk into blank unconsciousness.

(To be continued.)

THE ESSAYIST.  
WHAT IS SPIRITUALISM?

BY GRETFRIARS.

THERE is no question of so much importance to the claims of Spiritualism on man's acceptance, as the one with which we preface this article.

In attempting to define what Spiritualism is, we are not disposed to defer, either to the vague and contradictory affirmations of common rumor, or to accept all the many-sided views taken of the subject by Spiritualists themselves.

In seeking for standards of right, morals, or religion, as in attempting to define Spiritualism, we are apt to mistake opinions for principles, and accept as authority the reflections of minds as fallible as our own.

Truth has been curtly defined as "that which is." Now when our minds are confused, and our judgments at fault, in the midst of the conflicting opinions that positive theorists would force upon us, is it not the part of wisdom to search earnestly and faithfully for "that which is," and afterwards proceed to draw our deductions and frame our theories concerning the significance and meaning of the facts we have observed?

Eschewing for the present the broad fields of research to which we have likened Spiritualism, namely, the standards of right, morals, and religion, let us for the nonce forget all our preconceived views and pet theories, and inquire what we have absolutely demonstrated to be FACT in Spiritualism.



Four well defined and well proven forms of fact have been evolved by the faithful and candid investigator: these are, first, that the soul of man survives the shock of death. Secondly, that the soul can and does, under favorable conditions not yet fully ascertained, communicate with man, through the signs and tokens called "spirit communion." Thirdly, that the soul retains the individuality which distinguished it in the mortal body. And fourthly, that the happiness or misery of the soul in its continued state of existence beyond the grave, depends upon the good or evil which it has performed on earth.

If it be asked, How far do these affirmations become proven truths? we answer, By the laws of evidence commonly accepted amongst men; by the fact that millions of spirits in different places, through different individuals, and under varieties of conditions that render collusion or mistake impossible, have testified to, and demonstrated each article of these four propositions beyond denial or doubt. Thus far, then, every faithful investigator into spirit communion is in a position to render an answer concerning his "ism," and to declare that these four cardinal points of his knowledge are absolutely true.

But the questioning world and the responding Spiritualist are not contented to rest here, nor limit their views of Spiritualism to the simple foundations of basic truth.

Endless are the theories which arise concerning the soul's substance and functions in the life beyond, and still more, on the nature of the signs and tokens by which spirits communicate, and the personages through whom the communion is effected.

It must be obvious that new and untrodden fields of physical science are here open to the foot of the explorer, and that a vast realm of knowledge will ultimately reward the student who seeks patiently to analyze and master these occult subjects. In the mean time, however, it may

require years or even generations of the most persistent experiment to discover the wonderfully potent but invisible forces which sustain spiritual existence.

The full understanding and application of the methods by which the spiritual telegraph is worked, may not be evolved without the careful and astute observation of a whole century's experience. Still, the evidences of scientific method, and the dependence upon fixed though unknown conditions which the phenomena of the communion evince, justify us in affirming that the philosophy of this communion involves the sublime and stupendous "science of soul."

But when we turn to the third and fourth axiomatic facts of Spiritualism, a new set of indications opens up before us.

Instead of scientific phenomena, the social, moral, and religious aspects of Spiritualism are disclosed. Consider, for example, the following propositions:—

"The soul retains the individuality and self-consciousness which distinguished it in the mortal body; and the happiness or misery of the soul in its continued existence beyond the grave depends on the good or evil which it has performed on earth."

All the mysteries of godliness, the vague imaginings concerning triune deities and God-men, the distracting vagaries of an immaculate conception, vicarious atonement, election, free grace and no grace, regeneration, infant and other wholesale forms of damnation, transubstantiation, and ecclesiastical obfuscation generally, vanish into thin air before the stern justice and practical import of these stupendous revelations.

"Death does not change the real man; heaven and hell are conditions manufactured within us; good and evil are the sole manufacturers, and progress is eternal."

A religion founded on such propositions as these,

may destroy the worth of heavenly passports, peddled out at the price of tithes and pew rents from ecclesiastical auction booths, or aim iconoclastic blows at the craft whose peculiar office is, as Pope describes, to "deal damnation round the world;" but if they are truths, and can be demonstrated as such, what matters it who stands or falls in opposing them? Popèdoms, bishoprics, conventicles and assemblies, will perish and be forgotten, even the popular saints whom it takes from ten to twenty thousand dollars a year, and their expenses to Europe, to sustain, will be remembered no more, whilst the recording angel's voice, echoed and reëchoed by millions of spirit witnesses, will thunder down the ages, "There is no more death, and the soul of man is in judgment for the deeds done in the body."

The conditions of life in the spheres, the means of growth and unfoldment, penalty and reward, inspiration, obsession, reincarnation and its emphatic denial, conjugal and ascetic life, together with recommendations how to pursue and how to avoid certain courses, constitute a great majority of the communications from the spirit world which are superadded to the facts of the communion, and involving, as they often do, contradictory and perplexing opinions, subserve but little other purpose than to prove that the spirit world is a human world, and that as yet we have not succeeded in evolving any other authentic forms of truth from the communion than the four basic facts above stated.

There is, however, one most valuable lesson to be learned from the various and contradictory communication of spirits, and it is this: that the sincere seeker for truth should never accept of any dictum, whether from mortals or immortals, that does not commend itself to our highest sense of right, and prove to be in harmony with the divine scheme of cause and effect revealed in the gospel of nature.

All spirits affirm, without any contrariety, that they have created their own heaven or hell from the good or evil deeds, words, and thoughts, which have made up the sum of their earthly lives.

All spirits represent heaven and hell as mental and moral states, not localities, and continue to affirm that the performance of good or evil deeds determine their continuance in these states in the spirit world, as on earth.

Here, then, we gain a pivotal point around which all the practical issues of earth life revolve, namely, the necessity for a correct definition of what good and evil means, and here, too, is it that all the "new departures," side issues, fierce discords, and bitter inharmonies which pervade the ranks of Spiritualism, enter upon the scene.

Spiritualists cannot truly realize the solemn truth of inevitable compensation and retribution for good and evil, without bracing all the energies of their being to the task of discovering what good and evil means, and how we may ensure the compensations of the one and avoid the penalties of the other.

The optimist adopts the easiest method of settling the question, that is, as far as his own satisfaction and word logic is concerned, for he declares that there is no evil, and, "Whatever is, is right." To the most casual observer of the conditions presented by the dark and undeveloped spirits who have not yet come out of the prison houses of crime committed on earth, this kind of logic does not pass for much more than "sounding brass, and tinkling cymbals."

Half a dozen visits to Mrs. Conant's circles at the *Banner of Light* office will suffice to convince the most transcendental of optimists that there are terrible conditions of suffering for some forms of human action, and glorious states of happiness resulting from others.

Back to our original proposition, therefore, we must return, and continue to ask, What is good and what is evil? and if we don't like these terms, What are those conditions of the spirit which result in happiness or misery hereafter? That a great many truth-loving minds should fancy they have discovered the basic principles of good and evil, when they are in reality only shadowing forth their own limited perceptions of life, is not to be wondered at, neither is it strange that newly awakened souls, under the mighty afflatus of the great modern Spiritual outpouring, in their eagerness to aid in inaugurating the practical religion demanded by Spiritualism, should mistake their ideas of some great radical change or favorite scheme of reform, for the exact methods required to build up "a new heaven and a new earth."

Now when, as too frequently happens, the reformer is fierce and dogmatical in enforcing his views, and the conservative bitter and denunciatory in rejecting them, the result is fatal to conviction on either side, and only ends in unspiritual antagonism and useless acts of recrimination.

Already the ranks of Spiritualism, once arrayed in serried masses of fraternal strength and zealous devotion to a common cause, are broken, disunited, and disgraced by the lamentable spirit of internal discord, whilst the good soldier who used to be engaged in doing gallant battle against all opponents to the glorious light of Spiritualism, spends his time in hurling epithets of scorn, and devising spiteful methods of wounding and abusing all and sundry who dissent from his own particular views of reform.

In the mean time we query, Is there no fundamental basis of truth in this great cause upon which all its adherents can agree, and from which each can quietly take their "departures," to act out their ideas of reform upon all other subjects, without insult and injury to those who do

not choose to follow in their footsteps? Already we have anticipated the answer to this question in the earlier statements of this article, and now we are prepared to advance to a still higher step of the temple of truth.

The belief that we must necessarily suffer or rejoice hereafter for all our acts of omission as well as commission here, forms a tremendous motor power, to urge us forward in any and every direction in which we think our duties lie. It has yet to be proved, however, that Spiritualism authoritatively defines what those several duties are, and in this sense it is an act of bold tyranny and presumptuous dogmatism for one individual to say to another, "You are no Spiritualist if you do not adopt the path I am treading, and indorse the theories I propound." It is a libel, too, on the present aspect of Spiritualism, for any individual to assert that this or that peculiar method of thought or action is Spiritualism, and that outside of it there is no Spiritualism.

Reasoning from the belief that Spiritualism is the grand motor which should pervade our lives, and urge us on to the performance of every duty which lies before us, every reform which can bless or benefit mankind is a part, though not the whole, of Spiritualism.

Every reformatory idea which can stimulate mankind to the better performance of a true and useful life, is a fit subject for discussion in our Spiritual literature, and on our Spiritual rostrums; and no idea, however trivial, or however grand, which helps to determine the character of the human soul, can be excluded from the all-embracing influence of Spiritualism. It may here be questioned whether we mean to include as fit subjects for discussion, and fit themes for Spiritual literature, politics, the various reforms of the day, such as social, moral, commercial, and even financial reforms; the labor and marriage questions; free love, and no love at all; woman's rights, and

woman's wrongs, etc.; to this query we emphatically answer, Yes! All these things are fit subjects for Spiritualistic discussion, and all these reforms would be better understood and better dealt with, considered from true Spiritualistic stand-points; but let us not forget the sharp line of demarcation to be drawn between the importance of the subjects and the variety of methods by which they are represented and sometimes misrepresented by their advocates.

As far as all these ideas of reform are portions of human interest, as far as they have an influence on the human soul here and its well-being hereafter, they emphatically come within the scope of Spiritualism to discuss, vitalize, and ultimately to deal with; but where individuals have the right to protest against the action of those especially devoted to an exposition of these subjects, is, that a belief in the communion of spirits does not necessarily commit the believer to all the theories and opinions entertained by other Spiritualists, and compel them to adopt the particular methods of reform which they propose.

It is one thing to state a grievance, but quite another to right it. We should far exceed the limits of this article were we to place in juxtaposition the load of wrong beneath which humanity groans, and the wild, contradictory, and sometimes pernicious methods by which even well-meaning persons propose to redress that wrong; and herein lies the injustice of labelling upon Spiritualism, opinions, theories, and views of reform, which to thousands of believers in spirit communion, and even to some of the advocates of the very reforms in question, appear erroneous, objectionable, and unspiritual.

The only standards of appeal which can ever resolve the vexed problems of human opinion, are the immutable laws underlying the whole scheme of being, and sternly manifested in the sublime chain of eternal cause and

effect, and it is only by a searching analysis of these divine methods of teaching that we shall ever clearly discern what is good and evil, or distinguish what is right and wrong.

Spirits hold the torch to illuminate these researches, but are not privileged or wise enough to be our dictators in applying them. Spiritualists are commanded, on the stern conditions of penalty and compensation, to seek into the profoundest depths of truth, and to act out their highest perceptions of it; but they are not privileged nor yet wise enough authoritatively to dictate to each other what methods of action are the only true and right ones, unless they can demonstrate their views by a strict analysis of the laws and harmonies of creation.

The great Poughkeepsie Seer, the profound and star-eyed prophet and clairvoyant, A. J. Davis, in enunciating the idea that life will never be fully understood until it becomes a "harmonial philosophy," has advanced a century beyond his age, and pointed to the only reconciler which can stand between divided opinions and clashing theories, namely, a true and harmonious science of life in all departments of thought and being. Spiritualism is not the unpractical transcendentalism which excludes the consideration of any vital question, or fails to reach down, as well as to climb up, to all life's issues and duties; but Spiritualism pronounces no dictum which is not founded upon the authority of truth, and admits of no special interpretation to suit the views of rabid radicalism, or narrow conservatism. It is the science of life here and hereafter, and as such, demands a scientific demonstration of every proposition made in its name.

It is all of life, and not a part only. It includes all reforms, without endorsing the views of all "reformers." It is the great "Pan" of the 19th century. When we can turn from the surface of life's ocean, cease to steer



our way by the many opposing directions in which our fellow voyagers are moving, and, sinking the plummet line of research into the deep waters of eternal truth, draw it up again freighted with those waymarks of immutable law upon which the Great Spirit has fixed the eternal order of being, then, and then only, we may conclude that we understand Spiritualism. Then and then only are we anchored on the standard of appeal before which the clamoring tones of human discord are hushed ; then and then only are we prepared to steer our way to the port of eternity by the chart of eternal and divine principles.

## THE GARLAND.

### SUMMARY OF A MONTH'S COMMUNION BETWEEN THE WORLD OF SPIRITS AND MORTALS.

ALTHOUGH our first essay at weaving a garland of Spiritual blossoms, gathered chiefly from the hands of the immortal gardeners of the "summer land," will not be tendered to the acceptance of humanity until the month of June has well nigh ripened into July, we avail ourselves of the expedient custom of commencing our summary from a well marked era, and find in the late March anniversaries precisely the starting-point which we require. The custom of observing the 31st day of March as a memorial season, is not only a graceful act of thankful acknowledgment on the part of mortals towards the wise immortals who, on that night of solemn import, succeeded in planting the battery by which the great spiritual telegraph was first successfully reached, but it affords to Spiritualists a fitting occasion to meet together and hold glad festivities in a spirit of universal agreement on at least one point of the comprehensive movement called "Spiritualism." At almost every other gathering where Spiritualists do congregate, the various questions which agitate the fields of politics and reform seem to arise like apples of discord, tempting men, and women too, to eat thereof, and forthwith become expelled from the Eden of harmony and the paradise of brotherly love; but at these anniversary gatherings, the hearts of the most rancorous and pugnacious seem to be filled with the contagious spirit of "peace on earth and good-will towards men,"

and few there are who cannot exclaim in the choral tones of an universal anthem, "It is good for us to be here."

The anniversary festivities of this season were less universally observed and largely attended than at the wide-spread celebrations of four years ago. Spiritualists of all classes of the community depend much on the spirit of revivalism to renew their faith. Satiated as they have been with the thronging marvels of the early manifestations, the tendency to renew their feverish appetite for excitement in other directions has rendered many an one cold in their appreciation of the enduring value of their noble "ism," even whilst they cannot unlearn or unknow its stupendous reality. The most interesting anniversary meetings of this season have been held at Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Providence, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Chicago, Waukegan, Vineland, graced by the presence of A. J. Davis, and Terre Haute, presided over by the Hon. R. D. Owen.

Throughout the United States, moreover, wherever Spiritual Sabbath meetings have been held, the various speakers have seasoned their exercises with felicitous allusions and appropriate remarks upon the solemnity of the occasion. The Boston anniversary was chiefly remarkable for the reappearance on the Spiritual rostrum of Mrs. Nellie Palmer, a lady whose transcendent eloquence and high mediumistic endowments have procured her a wide-spread reputation throughout the West, where she was known through her former marriage relations as Mrs. Nellie Wiltsie Bronson. That the gifts of fortune which are now lavishly bestowed on Mrs. Palmer may not wholly rob the Spiritual rostrum of her valuable service, is the hope of all who had the good fortune to hear her admirable address at the late Boston anniversary. Miss Jennie Leys, the last new and brilliant light that has arisen to grace the Spiritual rostrum, Mrs. Conant, the in-

spired medium of the *Banner of Light* communications, and Professor Denton, the veteran war-horse of scientific theology, contributed good service on the occasion. The Spiritualists of Terre Haute were more than favored by the presence of Hon. Robert Dale Owen, whose anniversary address was a masterpiece of logical oratory.

One of the chief sources of agitation which has moved the Spiritualistic tides during the past two months, has been the alleged exposure of Dr. Henry Slade, the celebrated physical force and test medium, formerly of Michigan, now of New York. The circumstances of this case seem to stand in brief thus: Dr. Slade has for many years past enjoyed the reputation of being one of the best, most powerful, and most reliable of public mediums in several phases. Some of these are the production of direct spirit writing, and playing on the accordeon by spirits in the light and before the eyes of the investigators. Hundreds of persons from the ranks of both public and private life have borne testimony to the unimpeachable character of his mediumship, when lo! a change comes over the spirit of the scene.

Dr. Slade claims to be endowed with a new gift; one rather rare and very remarkable, but still not proved to be limited to one person, or unattainable to many; this is the production of spirit faces in a semi-darkened apartment. Shortly after the above named manifestations had commenced, a woman whose position and belief are now professedly antagonistic to Dr. Slade, who avows her disbelief in Spiritualism, and manifests an unmistakable spite against the doctor, comes forward and declares her opinion that he is an impostor, and has produced the so-called "spirit faces" by mechanical contrivance. Now the principal if not the only evidence she can offer of her assertions is, that after acting the spy for some time in the house of the accused, and behaving like a thief or

house-breaker in searching into his private repositories, she found a few masks and a spool of silk; where the presence of such objects were not to her mind accounted for.

The writer simply states here, that he has had sufficient evidence that Dr. Slade has a penchant for dressing up in masquerading attire, and that he has himself seen him arrayed in fantastic costumes on occasions when he was obviously amusing himself with the act, or gratifying some fantastic spirit with his whim. Aye! but the spool of silk, and that too found in the circle room, without any apparent reason why it should be there!

It certainly is a grave charge to find a spool of silk in a room where a lady's work-basket does not accompany it; but if the thousands of indisputable tests which Dr. Slade has given, if the testimony of hundreds of reliable witnesses to his truth and marvelous powers, and years of an unstained life and character, are all to be swept away by a stray spool of silk, and the opinion of one spiteful woman, who cannot prove a single charge she makes, then farewell Spiritualism, and farewell all the rules of testimony at once! Dr. Slade still lives, his mediumship is as strong, and his rooms as much thronged as ever.

The spirits at Moravia are still meeting and greeting their friends, through the mediumship of Mrs. Andrews, at Keeler's circle rooms. An occasional diminution in the force which attends these remarkable manifestations is apparent to some of the visitors, and it is not unnaturally observed that the poor lady through whose mediumship these startling developments are presented is fearfully overtaxed, drained even to her very life's core. Within the last four months, the writer has learned, through the testimony of a wholly reliable witness, that no less than eighty-seven spirits have appeared who have been recognized by their friends. Very many more than this num-

ber of faces have been seen, no doubt, but our informant speaks of test demonstrations, for which he is prepared to show adequate testimony.

Amongst the new developments of supramundane powers which are flashing upon us daily from the source of all power, the realm of forces, we select the following as specimens:—

The *Binghamton Daily Republican* reports the doings of a negro, whom the editor graphically describes as “a black salamander.” This man is said to walk on and handle red-hot iron plates with as much impunity as other persons touch the green turf. The *Republican* gives the following item as the account rendered by the man himself, of his own phenomenal gift:—

Coleman says that he is no worldly man. Once, while walking in the woods, near the Natural Bridge in Virginia, meditating upon the greatness of the Supreme Being, a small still voice spoke to him from above, saying: “Now will I show this unbelieving age a miration! I caused Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego to walk through the fiery furnace, and I will give you the power to walk on hot iron.”

Coleman thought the voice was trying to get him into a muss, and he had much hesitancy about trying any experiments to test the reality of the “miration,” but he finally ventured upon hot pigs of iron from a furnace, and unlike unbelieving Peter, he did not sink. The familiarity of the author of the “miration” with the names of the Hebrew children should have convicted Coleman that it was no put-up job.

The *Religio-Philosophical Journal* reports that a veritable case of a spirit portrait appearing spontaneously on a pane of window glass, has occurred in Virginia City, Nevada. In another issue of the same journal, a graphic account is given of the spirit faces and heads which have appeared through the mediumship of Mr. H. Bastian, and been recognized by their friends. Various other new developments are reported from different parts of the United States, amongst them the advent of a little trance medium of six years old, who resides in the city of Cincinnati,

and who, for the last seven months, every night on going to bid her father and mother good-night, has been suddenly entranced, and delivered "poetic sermons," which, as her father asserts, for sublimity and piety, he has never heard excelled. This little lady is a seeing medium, also, and frequently pauses in her work, play, or studies, to describe "the angels" whom she sees in the air. These descriptions have, in every instance, been recognized as applying to some deceased person.

Mr. Thomas McGinn, writing from St. Louis, details a case of singular persecution on the part of a "talking spirit," who persists in following about his little girl Rosa, aged ten years, and in her presence, but not through her organs, uttering profane and sometimes pious language, purporting to come from a negro who was formerly a slave in his family, of imbecile mind, and habits of speaking exactly similar to the words which are heard in the presence of the child.

Mr. McGinn adds, like our Cincinnati correspondent, that though they communicate these facts for the benefit of Spiritual science, they are unwilling to call the attention of the public to their little mediums, rationally fearing the effect which crowds of heterogeneous minds may have upon their tender youth and susceptible organisms.

In the realm of spirit art, the veteran mediums already before the public are making steady advances. The most satisfactory accounts are given of pictures produced through the mediumship of Mrs. Blair, N. B. Starr, Wm. Mumler, Willis, of Indiana, and others, whose gifts lie in that peculiar direction.

The Davenport Brothers have been exposed again for the hundredth time, and for the hundredth time the expositors have been proved to be themselves the humbugs.

A long and brilliant list of speaking mediums report their good work and indefatigable labors through the

columns of the Spiritual papers. Thomas Gales Forster, one of the earliest, as he has been, and still remains, one of the most esteemed for logic, eloquence, and high Spiritual endowments, has accepted a call to occupy the New York platform for one year, commencing from last January.

Mrs. Nellie T. Brigham, a very interesting trance-speaker, occupies the Spiritual rostrum at Hartford for the same period of time. J. M. Peebles, the brilliant and admired author of several of the best Spiritual works of the day, has been established at Troy, N. Y., and the general tendency to a more stable and permanent order of things amongst the committees having charge of the Spiritual rostrums, is everywhere becoming more and more apparent.

An excellent organization has just been established in Boston, entitled the "Boston Spiritualists' Union." This society holds regular meetings for the discussion of principles and the design of elaborating practical schemes of usefulness. A reading-room and library is to be connected with their undertaking, and a really vital tone of practical endeavor pervades the tracts and circulars which they have put forth.

Several publications of sterling value have been added to the repertoire of Spiritual literature quite recently. The most remarkable, as well as valuable of these are Hon. Robert Dale Owen's "Debatable Land," a splendid effort of one of the most scholarly and lucid minds of the age; "The Spiritual Pilgrim," by J. M. Peebles, a book of thrilling interest and beauty; "Looking Beyond," a high-toned, masterly view of Spiritual anthropology, by J. O. Barret; "Flashes of Light from the Spirit Land," a collection of extraordinary communications given through the mediumship of Mrs. J. H. Conant, the celebrated and inspired medium for the *Banner of Light* circles; and three



works of rare merit and importance entitled "Mental Cure," "Vital Magnetic Cure," and "Nature's Laws in Human Life." The last named of this trio of Spiritual gems is the only one of which we are qualified to speak from personal knowledge. It is an exhaustive summary of the best things, best persons, and best sayings, that have appeared in the great Spiritual movement; whilst report speaks of the other two volumes as productions of equal merit. Several excellent articles on "Mediums and Mediumship," written by Mr. Thos. Hazard, of Rhode Island, for the *Banner of Light*, are now, by the enterprise of its editors, given to the world in pamphlet form; and all these valuable publications have been poured forth from the ocean of Spiritual ideality within the comparatively short period of a few months.

In the mean time, the columns of the Spiritual periodicals are glittering with a long list of works comprising tracts, essays, poems, and treatises, from the illuminated minds of A. J. Davis, Lizzie Doten, Prof. Denton, Maria King, Lois Waisbrooker, Hudson Tuttle, Emma Hardinge, Warren Barlow, G. L. Ditson, etc., that would do honor and reflect lustre on any set of special people and special thinkers. We cannot conclude this necessarily limited view of the Spiritual "situation," without a few lines of honorable mention devoted to the Spiritual journals, and those who, with unwearied self-sacrifice and uncounted devotion, have upheld and sustained and represented the cause of Spiritualism by pen, purse, and brain, for years past, and who still bear the cross of effort demanded for this great work. Foremost of these, stands the *Banner of Light*, whose able corps of editors and contributors have, with a "sad sincerity" beyond all praise, and beyond all power of human appreciation, perhaps, borne "the heat and burden of the day," in times far more perilous and unremunerative than the present,

and who still cater for its readers in all the various phases of thought which they demand, with unflinching courage and brilliant ability.

In New York, A. A. Wheelock, with his noble; self-sacrificing little wife (truly a helpmeet for the best of men), still conducts the *American Spiritualist*, recently located at Cleveland, Ohio), with the real "vim" and ability of an earnest and thorough-paced reformer. As a lecturer, writer, reformer, and friend to humanity generally, A. A. Wheelock is a true man, and deserves the cordial support of his fellow laborers in all his undertakings.

Burnt out by the overwhelming ocean of flame which swept over the doomed city of Chicago, one day, and ere the return of the seventh day from the dire calamity established again, his paper printed, published, issued in part by the light of the flames which were burning up his office, type, books, and stock, S. S. Jones, of Chicago, issues in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, a most valuable Spiritual newspaper. Full of fact, intelligent thought, and interesting details, this periodical occupies a niche of its own. Differing in some respects from the other journals, as they differ from it, the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* is emphatically a Star in the West, whose beams shed Spiritual light and blessing on its large circle of readers and patrons.

Mrs. Lou Kimball's bright little *Lyceum Banner* is also published in Chicago, and has its special claims on the support of its special admirers. It must be added that Mrs. Kimball's paper has a sphere of usefulness peculiar to itself, being devoted to the interests of the Progressive Lyceum movement, and the edification of its young people. If talent, indefatigable perseverance, and years of patient self-sacrifice, ever deserved well of humanity, Mrs. Kimball has all those qualities to advance

her claim on the public in favor of her excellent little periodical.

A German Spiritual paper, of the highest literary tone and merit, has recently been established in Washington, by Dr. Schücking, entitled *The Round Table*. The brilliant ability of its eminent editor, and the splendid staff of contributors who grace its columns, are sufficient guarantee for its superior merits.

And now, by way of epilogue to this our trial number, let us add a few closing words in connection with the immediate interests of THE WESTERN STAR. We have no apology to offer for shortcomings, having conscientiously given the best that the inspiration of its several contributors could furnish, and the limitations of space will allow. It is quite possible that we may do better in future numbers; it is equally on the cards of destiny that some of our readers may deem our best efforts our worst.

The synopsis of subjects to be treated of in this periodical will be faithfully represented from time to time, but we must advise our over *exigéant* readers, that *all* these subjects cannot be included in one number, especially in view of the length and importance of some of the articles tendered for publication.

As an illustration of our design in giving the different subjects promised, we propose in the next number to substitute for our biographical sketch of modern mediums, a brief notice drawn from the realms of antique Spiritualism; for our summary of passing events in this country, we shall in our next issue give place to our foreign correspondents. "The History of Modern American Spiritualism," and the series of papers entitled "Ghost Land," will still be continued. Our reviewer's desk, and the bureau for correspondence, is not yet fully open, and on this head we beg to add, that the commentators and critics who de-

sire to involve us in any of the inharmonious conditions and recriminative correspondence; with which so many lovers of freedom delight to tyrannize over all who presume to differ from themselves, are simply referred to our "Salutatory," in which the Editor's plan of action is laid down, with a substructure of principle from which this writer believes there will be no departure.

Correspondence, advertisements, financial, friendly, and sympathetic support, are honestly and earnestly solicited. If subscriptions adequate to meet the expenses involved in this publication are advanced, it will be a permanent human success; *au contraire*; — and the history of humanity has fully prepared us for such a result, — THE WESTERN STAR will close its brief period of existence on earth, but continue to shine in the firmament which is overarched with good intentions forever!

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