

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 WESTERN STAR.

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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 and other unpublished matter, as well as literature now out of print, which renders the treasures she has been collecting during many past years priceless, and fully equivalent to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 Silyia, Prophets, and Ecstasies of the Ancient and Middle Ages.

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5th. Foreign Spiritualism, Transatlantic Correspondence, etc.

6th. Communications from Spirits.

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ERRATA.

In "The Anchor of Hope" (poetry), August Number, on fourth line, second verse, read "beams" for "blooms."

NINTH EDITION

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OF
MODERN AMERICAN
SPIRITUALISM:

A TWENTY YEARS' RECORD

OF THE

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THE WESTERN STAR.

VOL. I.—OCTOBER, 1872.—NO. 4.



LIFE'S TRIPLE CORD.

EXTREMES of condition call out unusual mental and spiritual excitement. The man of robust health and iron nerves, who sweeps all trifling impediments from his path, and steers straight to his goal, has but faint conception of the reverse side of the picture. He awakes with the birds, forages all day, and at eve folds his wings, and sleeps that deep, unconscious repose, which insures recuperation. He commands his forces, and says, Thus far and no farther. He can stop the whirl of the brain, and prevent strain by timely amusement. He can replace one quality of fatigue by another, and so preserve needful balance. A book, ride, walk, play, even physical labor, are so many implements in his hand. He uses them at will, and is "master of the situation." He may be thankful, and think he appreciates his gifts; but he cannot realize them till he has been overpowered by sickness, and disarmed. Then his days are weariness, and his nights pandemonium, a combined dance of sprites and hobgoblins. He burns, freezes, drowns; falls from precipices; clings to roofs; is chased by officers and wild animals; is lost in the snow, or climbs perpendicular ice-shafts. He is unleashed, and at the mercy of every jar, touch, breath, voice. He has no concentration; nothing suits; his

drinks are too hot or too cold; his porridge is too thick or too thin; his meats over or under done. The bed is hard, the pillow soft, the clothes heavy. Our giant is shorn, and his plume trails in the dust. He cannot pray, although he may have a certificate of saintship. He is under a ban, and must await the unbarring of the doors. He vacillates between life and death, hope and despair. He fails, stands still, hardly knows whether to summon lawyer or minister, when lo! a sensation creeps over him that he is better. It is as intangible as the air, and as sure as truth. No matter whence the conviction came, it is there. He is alive again. By degrees, the old fire flames anew, and there springs within him a petition such as he could never have framed before, akin in force to that of Wolsey when he said, "O, for one hour of youth!" He burns with enthusiasm, longs for restoration, and henceforth he will live only (as he then deems) that he may serve his kind.

In the whole vocabulary, there are no words to him like corporeal soundness. The talismanic spell which opens up to him the best and holiest path in life is

HEALTH.

In mazes of doubt, perplexed by our own affairs and harassed by those of others, we peer through this glass and then that, and yet the haze continues. Lines run together; spray rises; the moon goes into a cloud; and the sun into an eclipse; we can discern nothing clearly. We dare not move, lest we slip into a fathomless pit. We cannot advise, for then the blind would only lead the blind. We feel our weakness, limitation, and long, O how intensely, for an outlook into a transparent sky! We turn our thoughts within — down into our depths, up into our empyrean; "over there" to the celestials, beyond to the Immaculate; and there surges, swells, and

rises within us such a stream of aspiration, that it surmounts all obstacles, takes hold of the Infinite, and all the forces of nature. We open every pore, and invoke the influx of the highest and best. Every pulsation is an open vessel, and every expiration propelling steam. In our exigency, we must be heard, and the soul pierces the universe with its cry. In entrancement, or lowliest waiting, we know not which, and still less how, the curtain is rolled up; the scales are dropped; and a white path is plain before us. We see our outset, if not our end; and with gratitude which language is impotent to paint, we plant our foot, sure that the first step is right. At such a juncture, questioned as to the highest boon which life's importunate issues demand, we should emphatically answer

WISDOM.

With ability to act, and intelligence to plan, how large appear the opportunities before us!

They are prominent as Alpine peaks, and multitudinous as midnight stars. They are of all shades and degrees, from an university to the simplest domestic convenience. We observe the where, and the method thereto; but we remember that our purse is short, our coins are copper and not gold. The heart may be tender, but it has no credit with the usurer. We can do but a small business without capital. No prize has come to us; neither has property inherited or bequeathed fallen to our lot. We may have extraordinary talents; genius may be ablaze in our brain; but how can we incarnate either in form without *means*,—the plastic clay in which the highest ideals of mind must take shape? We can spare nothing from our daily toil.

The bitter strife is all fought out for bread.

In this dilemma, with hungry eyes upon us and waiting

hands outstretched to us in vain; with shrinking timidity on the one side, and the desperate "for God's sake" on the other; with letters which no clerk could answer, rings at our gate which vibrate all day long like death knells, appeals which rend our hearts, voices distracting our tired ears, and cries for aid which our fainting spirits cannot answer, — paths of escape flit before us like broken images on every side; but none are real, none guide us to the end, none can sustain or meet the pressing urgency of life's demands, but one. There seems but one way of escape, and that through **WEALTH**. Whether hedged in ourselves by shoals on which our talents, genius, good intent, or powers to act, lie shipwrecked; whether bent on errands of mercy for others, pledged to the rescue of humanity, or melted with pity for all, we supplicate means as our only salvation, and place it, for the time, above all other requisitions.

Experience, advice, or calm reflection, might diminish our eagerness, and substitute patient resignation for wild unrest; but under the scorching rays of bitter sacrifice, the only magic wand which seems able to dissipate life's countless ills, allay the pangs of thirst and hunger, heat and cold, strike out the sparks of genius from the soul, clothe the earth with beauty, roll back the waves of crime propelled by want, push on the car of progress stayed for lack of means, is —

WEALTH.

EPILOGUE BY THE EDITOR OF THE WESTERN STAR.

If there are any hands amongst our readers that hold the ends of the "triple cord," and yet are sluggish in binding them around the suffering forms of their fellow creatures, let the agonies so graphically depicted in the above beautiful fragment fall heavily upon them, and

teach them the uses, as well as the value, of the blessings they enjoy.

The ministration of healing and kindness in sickness, light and instruction to the spiritually blind, and liberal aid to the children of toil and genius, seem to be talents especially confided to those whose eternal responsibility has been proved to them by the facts of Spiritualism.

Foremost amongst the revealments those facts have brought, is the knowledge that there is no forgiveness of sins, whether of omission or commission.

If HEALTH, WISDOM, and WEALTH form a "triple cord" of incalculable power to overcome life's evils, what an immeasurable responsibility rests on those who enjoy their blessings, without the heart to use them for the behoof of others as well as themselves!

The whole Spiritualistic movement, and all the workers engaged in promoting it, whether Lecturers, Mediums, Healers, Writers, or Editors, with scarcely any exception, now and heretofore, languish, pine, and wreck themselves and their undertakings, because they lack the third strand of the triple cord to uphold them.

They could, would, and do, give physical health and spiritual light to mankind out of their abundance; and they could, and would, but cannot, give an hundred fold the amount they do, if the niggard hands of those that hold the third end of the cord did not too often tighten, instead of relaxing, at the piteous cry of "For humanity's sake!" uttered in vain.

Whenever a wise or useful Spiritualistic institution fails; whenever a toiling, half-starved editor collapses, and valuable efforts struggle into spasmodic life, to go out like lamps unfed by oil, the rich in our ranks have done it. But have the rich in our ranks forgotten that the golden chains they hug to their souls on earth, will cling to them "over there," and hang like millstones round their

necks? They have starved the toiler, and robbed mankind for a season, but far more surely starved and robbed their own spirits for untold ages!

The spirits' portion in the "triple cord" are the gifts of health and wisdom; that of the mortals, wealth. Our cause has been disgraced for years, by the pitiful failures incurred by our faithful workers, through the lack of means to promote their efforts, sustain their labors, and dispense their gifts. Rich Spiritualists, look to it! Withhold the strong cord of wealth that in this cause, at least, is necessary to promote health and dispense wisdom, and you may find that the blessings you have denied to others on earth are your failures in the hereafter! With whatsoever measure you mete shall it be meted to you again. The triple cord of human life binds us about in its consequences through eternity, and the blossoms of spiritual health, soul-wisdom, and eternal wealth, will never be gathered in heaven by those who have not sown the seeds in the loving hearts whom the great Spirit has given us power and means to minister to on earth.

MODERN AMERICAN SPIRITUALISM;

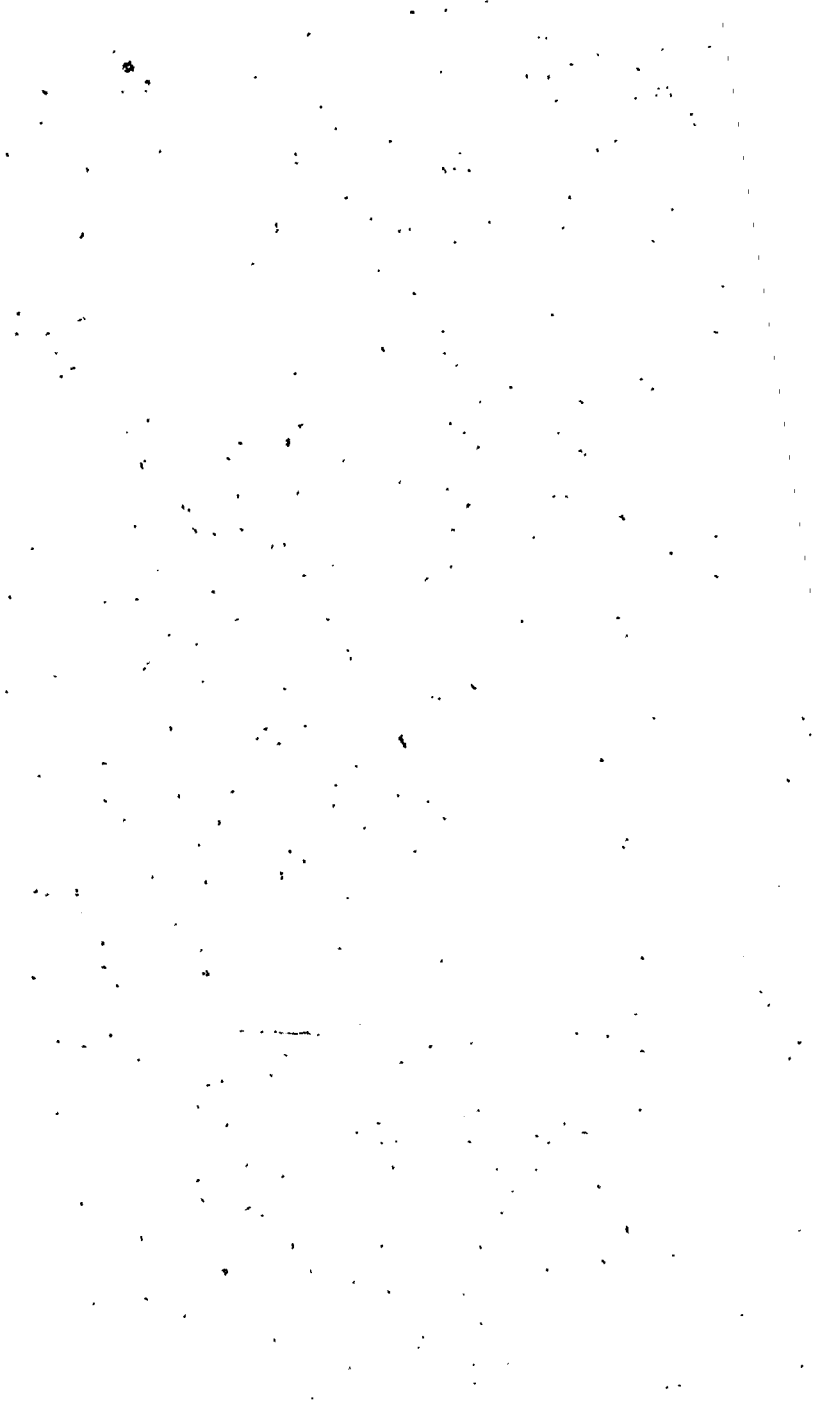
OR,

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

BY

EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN.

VOL. II.—CHAPTER IV.



IV.

TEST FACTS ; OR, FIRST LETTERS IN THE ALPHABET OF SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPHY.

CHAPTER IV.

The Value of Test Facts. — Dr. John Mayhew and the White Rose. — Retributive Justice from Spirit World. — The Deaf and Dumb Alphabet. — A Grateful Indian Spirit. — Table-tipping Poetry. — Spiritual Writing Masters. — "Poor Jack" in the Spirit World. — Spirits and Permutation Locks. — The Last Sands of Theory shaken.

"Lo! here are the footsteps of angels;
Tread softly, the place is holy ground.

Joseph, Sacred Opera.

It has been claimed with equal truth and justice that the proofs which have been given of spirit identity, during the progress of the great modern outpouring, have done more to convince mankind of the soul's continued existence beyond the grave, than all the sermons that have been preached since the year 1. As a corollary to the leading article of the last number, we select from amongst the regular succession of chapters designed to carry forward the history of modern American Spiritualism from its commencement to its present status, that portion of the writings which groups together a number and variety of test facts, demonstrative of the identity of the communicating spirit. These narratives have now lost their charm, whether of novelty or phenomenal marvel.

Thousands of similar occurrences have made up the

experiences of the last quarter of a century ; in fact, so familiar have they become, that we commonly hear the full-fledged Spiritualist declaring he has outgrown the interest in, or necessity for test facts. Perhaps it might be as well for the progress of the cause, and the rebuke of impostors and self-delusionists, if Spiritualists had not entirely outgrown their interest in the test facts of the movement ; certain it is that if Alexander the Great or Napoleon Bonaparte were affirmed to be in communication with us through the most exalted of trance-speakers, we should have no means of proving the truth of the allegation, or discriminating between the utterances of the speaker and the assumed spiritual control ; but if plain John Smith comes, identifying himself by a series of simple tests as the father of the investigator, he brings with him evidences of the soul's immortality of a far more convincing character than the eloquence of an Alexander or Napoleon ; nay more, John Smith, as a pilgrim from the land of mystery, which the eye of mortal has never scanned, or the foot of mortal trod, is enabled to satisfy all the yearnings of his friends' affectionate anxiety in his behalf, besides bringing them the stupendous knowledge of their own future existence.

As to any other phases of spirit communion, they may astonish and delight by their phenomenal power, instruct by their wisdom, and perplex by their scientific indications, but they can prove nothing of the soul's hereafter, unless they are accompanied by tests of spiritual identity.

Deeming, then, such facts to be the corner-stone upon which the whole superstructure of Spiritualism rests, we shall devote a few pages to narratives of the varied and ingenious methods in which spirits have communicated, premising that each case is selected as a representative, one of thousands of others, and that the truth of all

has been thoroughly scrutinized and proved by the author.

As an illustration of the untiring love and fidelity with which guardian spirits surround us, we may refer to a narrative written for the *Spiritual Age* in 1858, wherein Dr. John Mayhew, an esteemed lecturer on Spiritualism, relates how constantly his angel daughter sought opportunities to manifest her continual presence about him, through various media, and by a great many ingenious methods.

This sweet spirit adopted as her test signal of recognition, a full-blown white rose, and it is equally surprising and curious to note in how many ways she displayed to her delighted father this interesting token of her presence. Sometimes she would influence strange mediums, entirely unknown to Dr. Mayhew, to present him with such a flower as "a gift from a loving spirit." Sometimes she would cause the medium to draw a white rose and give him, and again impress musicians to play or sing "The Last Rose of Summer," whilst manifesting in other ways her presiding influence. Wherever his labors in behalf of Spiritualism conducted the indefatigable lecturer, the fair spirit, hovering around his footsteps with the deathless affection of the immortal, would appear in the halo of her celestial surroundings, pure as light, tender as the brooding mother over the cradle of her babe, and ever signaling her presence through the familiar test of the full-blown "white rose."

Another proof of spiritual love and ministration for the dear ones left behind gives us the opportunity of considering a different class of test facts, namely, the disturbances which arise spontaneously, and without the invocatory processes of the circle, produced by anxious guardian spirits, who desire to promote justice or redress wrongs inflicted on some of their beloved friends or kindred.

In the month of November, 1856, a family not interested in Spiritualism, residing in the village of Killingly, Conn., were one night awakened from sleep by loud and unaccountable noises, heavy poundings, slamming of doors, and trampling of feet, which resounded through every part of the house.

The terrified inmates searched the premises thoroughly, and, being unable to discover any cause for the disturbances, retired to bed again, but only to be recalled by renewed and still more boisterous demonstrations. These alarming proceedings having been continued for several days, and all the assembled neighbors remaining still in ignorance of the cause, a well-known Spiritualist in the vicinity was invited to assist at the investigation. This gentleman had no sooner heard the sounds, and witnessed the character of the demonstrations, than he attributed them to the desire of a restless spirit to make known something special to the inhabitants of the possessed dwelling. Under the direction of the experienced investigator a circle was formed, and through the orderly rappings that then ensued, a spirit, announcing himself by the name of one who had recently passed away in that village, emphatically insisted that certain acts of justice should be done to his suffering widow, and that his children, who were in a state of extreme destitution, should be provided for. To render these solemn charges all the more significant, the person whose duty it was to carry them into operation was actually present at the séance. It is almost unnecessary to add that the spirit's requisitions were immediately complied with, and from that time the disturbances changed into kind and conciliatory circle communications.

From this case, selected from multitudes of others in the author's possession, we may derive an answer to the oft-repeated questioning of those who have not tracked out

the footprints of Spiritual history, "Why don't the spirits return to perform acts of justice for the wronged, protection for the helpless, and use to all?" The spirits have done this in thousands of instances where the records are not made public, or else passed lightly by and forgotten; and where they fail, it is not because they are unmindful of the wrongs and needs of humanity, but because they lack the requisite mediumistic force to make the demonstrations necessary to attract attention, and publish their desires.

In the case above cited, a young lady residing in the possessed dwelling was found to be endowed with the requisite mediumistic aura; but though it is not always attainable, and sensuous demonstrations cannot consequently be effected, the wrong-doer may assure himself the eyes of invisible avengers are upon him. Cruel step-fathers and mothers cannot inflict injury upon helpless orphans unnoted. Unjust and avaricious administrators, plunderers of the widow and orphan, oppressors of the weak, and slanderers of the so-called "dead," might take a lesson from the above simple recital. There are no dead; and if the loud and angry reverberations of the spiritual thunder cannot reach men's ears, and startle them from their impious slumbers, the swift, though silent footsteps of retribution, acting through the hidden veins and arteries of life's mysterious organism, will pursue the wrong-doer, and find him out, even if he should call upon the mountains to cover him, or seek to hide away his crimes in the very earth's centre.

The following little narrative is of so striking a character, and is written with so much touching simplicity, by Mr. H. B. Storer, the esteemed Spiritual lecturer, that we give it verbatim in that gentleman's own words.

On the Sabbath of August 2d, I lectured at Syracuse, N. Y., and between the morning and evening service attended a circle, numbering

about twenty persons, at the house of Mrs. Bears. Among those present were two ladies and two gentlemen, who had come in from a neighboring town to attend my lectures, and were unexpectedly present at the circle. During the session, a test medium of this city, Mrs. Corwin, was entranced by a spirit, and extended her hand to one of the gentlemen referred to. He rose from the opposite side of the room, passed over, and took a seat by her side. The spirit then seemed to be making great efforts to speak, apparently unable to control the vocal organs of the medium, and the minds of all persons in the room, if, perhaps, we except the relatives of the spirit, were intensely sympathizing with the effort. It was noticed, however, that the left hand of the medium was occasionally raised, and the fingers moved, and soon the gentleman announced that the spirit had identified itself to him, "and in the right way, too." All supposed this to have been a private sign, and still continuing to expect remarks from the spirit, one after another would occasionally suggest conditions that might favor the influence. At this point another spirit controlled the medium, and calmly stated, that if all would keep quiet, the wife of the gentleman seated by the medium would again endeavor to communicate; that she was deaf and dumb, when in the form, and would communicate through the deaf and dumb alphabet. Accordingly, all became quiet, and soon the spirit wife again manifested, and for the space of some twenty minutes conversed with her husband, the medium's fingers being controlled to spell out both answers and suggestions, through those mechanical signs known as "the mute alphabet."

It was indeed a deeply interesting sight to see the husband seated silently before the medium, her eyes tightly closed in the deep trance, spelling out with his fingers questions to his wife, and that wife responding to his thoughts through the form of another, and moving fingers which had never before been trained to such expression. The spirit also answered his mental questions, by writing answers through the medium's hand, and in both forms of control, was entirely successful in giving truthful responses to every question.

It is proper here to state that the medium and the parties spoken of were entire strangers to each other; and further, that the medium has never seen the deaf and dumb alphabet employed. Tears freely fell when allusion was made by the spirit to her present state in the spirit world,—not deaf and dumb, as upon the earth, but conscious of her husband's thoughts, and every sense quickened to perceive and express the beauties of her spirit home. — *Spiritual Age.*

It will be observed that the narrative of Mr. Storer represents two forms of test mediumship, namely, the

trance and pantomimic ; besides illustrating, in a forcible manner, how watchfully our spirit friends avail themselves of every opportunity to communicate with us. The gentleman, who was the fortunate recipient of the convincing test detailed above, seemed to have been led to visit Mr. Storer's lecture, and the circle at Mrs. Bears', by mere chance ; in fact, he stated as much to the assembled company, but he also added that the tender companion who had just manifested herself, had declared his presence there was due to her silent monitions ; that she had long been seeking opportunities to give him this test, and had led him by deep, but irresistible impressions up to that touching point in their history. What a striking example is here afforded, of the invisible, yet ceaseless ministry of love, by which we are surrounded !

Mr. A. E. Horton, once a resident of a wild district in California, detailed in his correspondence to the *Banner of Light* a thrilling incident, in which, by aid of his revolver and indomitable courage, he succeeded in rescuing an old Indian, whom he knew to be honest and trustworthy, from lynching at the hands of a party of infuriated Irishmen, who had accused the old man of a theft which it subsequently turned out he was entirely innocent of. The poor red-man had dislocated his shoulder whilst hunting, and being very fond of the custom of shaking hands, learned from the whites with whom he came in contact, presented a most grotesque, but striking appearance, when he held out his hand to be shaken, the shoulder bone rising awkwardly, and the elbow sinking in completely to the pit of the stomach.

Some years subsequent to the rescue above alluded to, and long after the old Indian had attained to the rest of "the happy hunting-grounds," Mr. Horton visited New York, and, by way of beguiling a leisure hour, was induced to visit a public spirit circle. Being, as he affirmed

a complete atheist and disbeliever in any spiritual existence, he regarded the appeals made to the different persons present with contemptuous incredulity, and even when the medium (a total stranger), addressing him, "professed," as he called it, to describe the apparition of a dearly loved brother standing by his side, he mentally determined "the manifestation" was nothing more than a "shrewd guess." Just as he was quitting the room, the medium, being still entranced, elevated her shoulder, threw her elbow into the pit of her stomach, and, imitating exactly the gesture, attitude, and even the tone of the old Indian, extended her hand to be shaken, and then poured out a flood of grateful expressions for the kindness and courage by which Mr. Horton had five years before saved his life in the far-off wilds of California. The information thus recalled with all the attendant circumstances, the graphic representation of the grateful Indian, and the shrewd narration of how cunningly he had worked to bring him to that circle completely broke down Mr. Horton's skepticism, and convinced him that "if a man die" he shall live again.

A TABLE-TIPPING MESSAGE.

Nothing is more common than to hear, even from the lips of Spiritualists themselves, the intelligence derived through table-tipping treated with indifference, and labeled as of "a very low order," and unworthy of "much credit."

To show how generally the minds of those present determine the quality of the intelligence rendered, we reprint the following lines, tipped out letter by letter, through the mediumship of a little child, a card alphabet, and a common wooden table, at a circle held in Lawrence, Mass., by a party of earnest investigators, who were desirous of questioning the spirits upon the results of the

calamitous American war, then raging between North and South. Let us add that these lines are a fairer specimen of thousands of the communications signaled from the spirit world, than much of that which is heralded before the world as the communications of the "very high spirits," whose names are often attached to very low productions.

Grand and sublime will be the sight,
When right shall triumph over might,
And the free flag shall wave.
No more shall wronged humanity
Plead all in vain for liberty ;
And the poor hunted slave
Shall use his freedom, newly given
By Law, by Justice, and by Heaven,
To dig Oppression's grave.
That star-bright flag shall wave on high,
Each fold all crowned with liberty ;
And then, from sun to sun,
The assembled hosts of earth shall gaze,
And shout, " All honor, glory, praise,
Be due to those who won ;
To those who yielded up their breath,
And died a martyr's noble death,"
That ye might yet be one."
Sacred and pure shall be their name,
Grandeur than any earthly fame,
Or the vain dream of glory.
Their bright realities are given
To us, ambassadors from heaven,
To tell their thrilling story ;
They bear aloft, that all may see,
The emblem of true liberty,
Their hearts' devotion holy.

In the town of Avon, Wisconsin, a remarkable series of Spiritual tests were given through the mediumship of Sarah Jane Pearl, a child only ten years of age, who, in the exercise of her gifts as a rapping, tipping, and writing medium, was actually taught the art of writing, of which

the little girl was entirely ignorant until compelled to frame letters under the guidance of the controlling influences. Through this child's mediumship, her profane brother was cured of the habit of swearing, and an inveterate inebriate became, as he has proved to the author, a sober temperance man.

Thousands of similar instances, both in respect to the teaching of unknown arts, such as reading, writing, music, drawing, and the cure of vicious habits, together with many items of scientific information, have been communicated by "the spirits," but as most of these experiences belong to the home, few of them, as in the case of Sarah Jane Pearl, become the subject of public information, and when so given they are too often treated as a nine days' wonder, pass away, and are forgotten, leaving the gaping skeptic or carping antagonist still crying, "Supposing it is all true, what is the use of it?"

From a record of some thousands of well defined test facts of spiritual presence, given through the mediumship of the late Mr. J. B. Conklin, of New York city (some of which were published in the pamphlet entitled "The Public Circle," and a still larger number entrusted to the author for future publication), we select the following as specimens. The first is given as an evidence how often the characteristics that distinguished the mortal inhere to the spirit; also as a glimpse at the nature of spirit life, with those who have cultivated little or no aspiration for progress in their earthly career.

October 2, 1854. — At a circle this evening, the following communication was made, purporting to come from the spirit of a sailor on board a New York pilot boat, which left the port fifteen years ago, and was not heard of afterwards.

Several persons were at the table pursuing their inquiries, and another, a sailor, sat apart as a looker-on.

Suddenly the medium became entranced, and, turning to the sailor, called out in a rough voice, "Come here, Ike!"

The sailor complied, and took a seat near the medium, who, throwing one arm over his neck, continued, —

"Sit down; don't be afraid! I've wanted to talk, and I've wanted to tell all about how I sailed out of your world; but I never could get Jack (the medium) to consent to listen to me, and I come here to-night to tell you.

"Well, ye see, we put out our last pilot on board the Aladdin; then we tied her up, and stood off to get an offing.

"Don't you remember what a night it was? We did not come together, as some supposed, but went down; because, ye see, Larry didn't handle her right; he brought her to, in the wrong time, and she swamped and went down.

"Then, leaving our wet clothes and bodies at the bottom, we woke up, rigged in a new suit from stem to stern!

"I ain't made much headway yet; 'cause, ye see, I've been a-drifting round with one and another of the kind that I liked; and they was, generally, jist such spirits as I was a man — full of fun and the devil — not caring for to-morrow, as long as we had enough for to-day.

"It's no fool of a job for a spirit, as you call us, to come up here and talk, without having somebody to draw them. I don't see why men should be such thundering fools, when spirits rap and tumble about things, to believe that they ain't spirits. Why, we've got just as much of a body as any of you, and I can't see why you can't see me.

"Now I ain't in this body (meaning the medium's); but there's an old codger standing by (George Fox, the controlling spirit of Mr. Conklin's circles), that has put a damper on the medium's outward part, and I shove in words and make him speak them, and he don't know what he says." (This last remark was given with a chuckle of delight, as if it was a capital joke.)

"Now, don't you believe anybody if they tell you that I ain't happy. I'm all right; and when I get ready, I'll top up my booms, and fill away for something better; I know I can have it.

"Now you go home, and tell your old man, that in less than six months he'll be here; now, you mind that."

On being asked to sign his name, the spirit said it would be of no use, as he was recognized; this the sailor who was present confirmed, adding that, though a stranger to every one present, he had come there expressly in the hope of getting a communication from this spirit, — also desiring to learn whether his father (the old man referred to), who was a great sufferer, would be likely to survive long. He said that his own name was Isaac, usually called "Ike," and that he had, unknown to any one present, made an appointment to meet the spirit sailor there that day.

On several occasions persons have sought to test the power of spirits, by leaving with Mr. Conklin "barrel" or "permutation" locks, to be opened under spiritual impression. One of these was left with him early in April, 1854, by Mr. James Bruce, of Williamsburgh; it had five movable rings, with twenty letters on the circumference of each ring. For the information of persons not familiar with these locks, it may be briefly stated that the rings are so arranged that one row of letters forms a word. The lock is then fastened, and the rings moved, when it becomes impossible to open the lock again except the rings are so arranged as to spell the right word.

A lock like the one in question allows of three million two hundred thousand combinations of its letters; so that there are so many chances to one that the key word is not ascertained by what is called a "lucky guess."

The lock had been in the medium's room for about a week, when, during a séance with a number of strangers, the medium was suddenly entranced, and said, —

"Strive, friends, in all your deportment in life, to manifest that child-like simplicity; the former of which will unlock the *brass*, the latter of which, when properly applied, will unlock the hearts of your fellow men. Open the lock at CHILD."

The lock was taken up, and, on being adjusted to the letters C H I L D, was opened at once.

A scientific gentleman, closely investigating the phenomena of Spiritualism, came into the room soon after the lock had been opened; and on its being shown to him, he took it aside, and adjusting it to another word, left it to be opened as before, after which the medium returned to attend the circle. The usual proceedings went on, and test questions were asked and answered, when the medium's hand wrote to a person present, "Friend P——, we wish thee to bring the lock. We desire to use the test for all."

The request was complied with, and the lock was placed upon the table before the circle. It was then written, "We desire the names of all persons present, and then we will give the word."

Nineteen names were accordingly subscribed. The medium's hand then wrote: —

"Friends! We have been giving evidence of the individuality and presence of spirits for years; and in many cases when we have given evidence, the fruits have not been profitable, owing to an improper use of the same. We do not give these tests for idle curiosity, but for the good of the cause. SOPHI.

GEORGE FOX."

The word *Sophi* opened the lock.

Although we are now making selections from a mass of records of sufficient magnitude to fill volumes, the limitations of our space will only allow of our adding one more narrative, and that is given as an illustration of the spirits' ingenuity in evading the hypothesis of "mind reading."

A gentleman standing high in the scientific world, and holding a distinguished position in a New England college, often visited the test mediums of Boston, and, although interested in the phenomena he witnessed, was predisposed (from his tendency to materialism) to attribute it to "mesmerism," "electrical force," and "mind reading."

Believing he had evidence of the truth of these positions, and feeling his dignity compromised by investigating subjects which, however curious, resulted in so little use or instruction to mankind, he determined to pursue a closing set of experiments, calculated, as he deemed, to prove his theory, after which he resolved to publish his experiences to the world by way of redeeming it from the "superstitious errors into which its blind faith in Spiritualism had betrayed it."

The Professor's first experiment in this benevolent direction was as follows:—

He took from a drawer at home a small package containing the hair of his deceased wife and only child.

He cherished these mementos of his departed treasures with an affection deepened into inconsolable regret, from his settled conviction that earth life was all of them that he should ever know, and that in the grave their cherished being was now mouldering into—less than dust and ashes—"mere nothingness!"

He had received many communications purporting to come from them, but so far from being convinced, he was confirmed in his theory, from the fact that every medium

persistently delineated some specialty of those with whom his own thoughts were so unceasingly filled.

The dark hair of the mother and the golden curls of the child would, he felt sure, be "as usual" accurately described, and thus add another link to this chain of evidence that all he had received was merely "mind reading."

Carefully placing his package in the breast pocket of his coat, he proceeded to call upon the author, then sitting as a test medium at the office of the *Christian Spiritualist*, in Broadway, New York city.

After the usual formulæ, the Professor inquired, "Can the spirit of my wife inform me what I have got in the breast pocket of my coat, that once belonged to her?"

"Nothing," was the prompt reply.

"I think there must be some mistake," was the next remark. "Try again, good spirit."

"You have nothing in that package, my husband," wrote the spirit, "that ever belonged to me; but there is something there that I worked, that once belonged to our child."

The influence then changed, and a rude drawing was produced, which represented a little square cloth, or d'oyley, the edges of which were embroidered in scallops, the centre being a basket of flowers.

The Professor started on seeing this sketch, and, after some hesitation, inquired, "Can this spirit describe to me what was the last veil my child, 'Ella,' ever wore on earth?"

Again the influence changed, and a childish spirit, who was in the habit of communicating with the Professor, and claimed to be his "little Ella," wrote in printed characters, —

"I never wore a veil on earth, dear papa. Mamma says it would have been too bad to cover up my pretty face."

"That expression was the mother's," said the puzzled inquirer, "but nevertheless the spirit (if it is one) does not know everything, for this drawing, rude as it is, exhibits a little lace d'oyley, which my child did wear as a veil on earth."

Before the sentence could be finished, the medium handed the Professor a slip of paper, on which was written, —

"I was not your child, when mamma placed that veil over a face from which the real child had fled. That lace only covered the face of the dead. I still live. ELLA."

The witnesses to this scene, and there were several present, beheld the inquirer, with a face quivering with emotion, and pale as the sheeted dead, spring from his seat, and hastily traverse the room in a condition of agitation terrible to witness; suddenly he paused, as if transfixed, snatched from his pocket a small paper parcel, which he tore open, suffering to fall upon the ground a tiny piece of lace, old, yellow, and crumpled, but which upon examination proved to be a *fac-simile* of the medium's drawing. The gentleman at the same time exclaimed, "My God! I thought I had taken a package of hair from the drawer. I had no conception that I had brought that piece of lace instead. I have mistaken the package, and it is not mind reading after all!"

The gentleman then explained that this little d'oyley had, in truth, been worked by the hand of his beloved companion; that she had often used the expression referred to by the child, about the latter's wearing a veil, but when the last dread hour of parting with their darling came, and ere the coffin was closed, which was to remove from the father's eyes the little form which had once contained his Ella, he had hastily gathered up that little piece of lace from the dead face, over which the mother's hand had tenderly laid it.

This little "veil," he added, the last thing that ever touched the mortal form of his child, he had preserved as a sacred memento, in the same drawer which contained the hair of both mother and child.

- Intending to bring the latter package for the purposes avowed above, he had mistaken them, as they lay side by side; hence he again and again emphatically repeated, "It was no mind reading," and "Nothing but the eye of a disembodied spirit could have perceived the enclosure, none but the wife and child could have so correctly described the circumstances connected with it."

Before the uncandid or partial critic ventures to sneer at the citations contained in this chapter, and, unable to quench such an array of living testimony, attempts to depreciate its value by scoffing at the trivial character of the means employed, let him remember that the special use of this class of manifestation is to prove the identity of the communicating spirit with that of some individual, who once inhabited the form of mortality, and who can only be known and recognized by the events or characteristics which marked its life on earth.

No attempt has been made to demonstrate the sublimity or exalted conditions of spirit life. The sole aim of these selections has been to show the various methods by which spirits can and do manifest tokens of their presence.

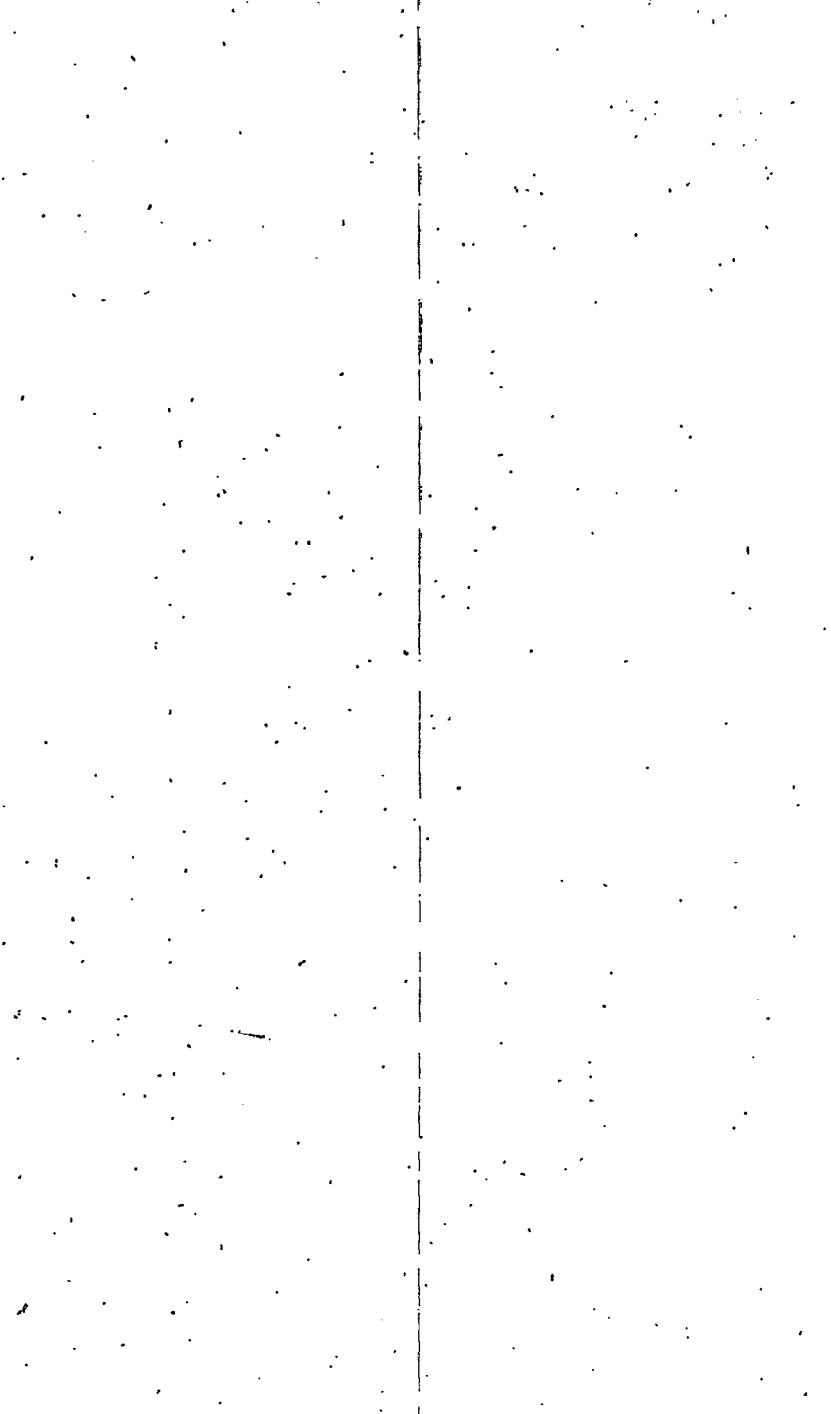
We know it is easy for scornful, one-sided critics, overlooking all other details which the stupendous history of Spiritualism includes, to make merry over the idea that "the souls of just men made perfect," instead of singing eternal hallelujahs to the twanging of golden harps, should be employed in finding out the name which opens a barrel lock, or peeping into vest pockets, to detect hidden locks of hair, etc. But supposing that no other being in the universe, but just those particular

spirits, could have performed these offices? Assuming that, their being performed by those spirits proves to the witnesses the sublime fact of the soul's continued existence, and leads to the momentous inquiry of the how that existence is maintained; and what are the relations of this human sphere with that from which the invisible operator has come?

Until the reader can realize, with the Spiritual historian, the immense influence which the collective test facts of spirit communion have exercised upon the opinions, theological beliefs, and individual lives and characters of the nineteenth century, he is in no position to pass judgment upon, much less to sneer at, the simple narratives contained in this chapter.

Petty as they may seem to the cold observer, to the recipients they have been gems of priceless value; sure tokens that their dead "still live," and that the problem of immortality is solved forever for them.

The experiences of millions of persons in America are rife with similar testimony; hence we feel that our task is accomplished when we merely classify and arrange those figures into groups, which form the cloud of Spiritual witnesses, whose presence illuminates the horizon of the nineteenth century.



NIGHT.

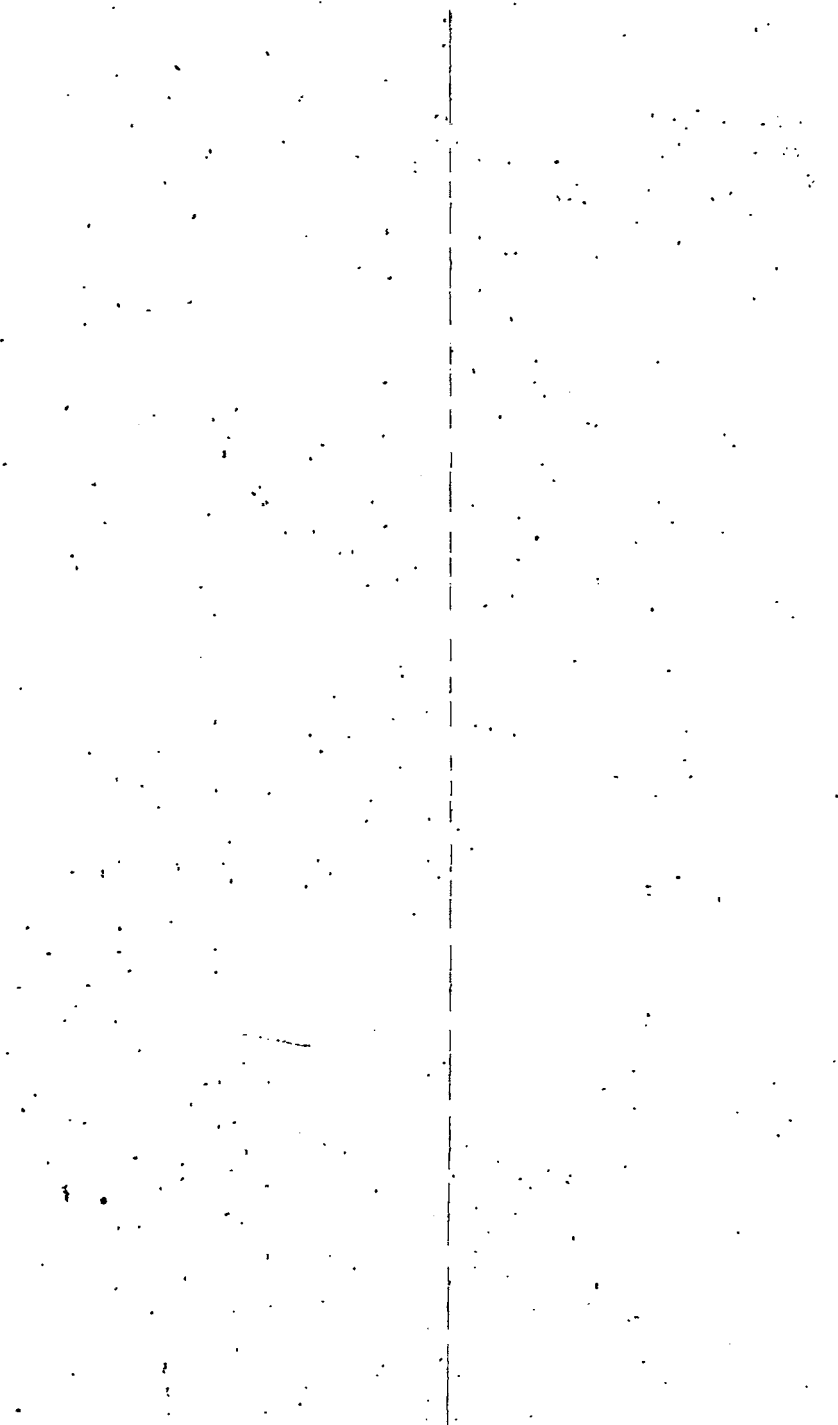
THE day declines
In yonder sky ;
The sweet moon shines,
With light on high !
Thus may the light
Of love sincere,
Dispel from night
The shades of fear !

The twinkling stars
Are burning bright,
In golden bars, —
A stream of light !
Thus may true friends
Bedeck life's sky,
With sweet amends
For days gone by !

Peace, peace around,
In earth and air !
Hushed, hushed each sound
Of toil and care !
Thus may sweet rest
Subdue sad strife,
Make midnight blest,
For coming life !

The night departs
In rising day ;
The morn upstarts
In bright array !
Thus may life's night
Emerge from gloom,
To heavenly light,
Immortal bloom !

WILLIAM BRUNTON.



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

BY AUSTRIA.

NO. IV.

ZWINGLER, THE BOHEMIAN.

To fulfill the promise which my teacher had made me of visiting Zwingler, we mounted several flights of stairs in an old house in Sophien Stradt, and at last reached a landing upon which many persons were congregated about and around an open door, through which I was led by Professor Marx into a large apartment, shabbily furnished, and half filled with loungers, amongst whom I recognized more than one official of the constabulary force of the city.

Pushing his way through the assembled company to a sort of recess at the far end of the room, the Professor addressed himself to a little black-eyed, oriental-looking individual, who was seated on a table, dangling his legs, and fidgeting restlessly about, whilst a grave official, in the habit of a notary, was taking down depositions or making notes from what the other was saying. The moment the little man set eyes on the Professor, he sprang from the table, and seizing his hand with a sort of fawning, propitiatory air, which seemed more like the action of deferential fear than real cordiality, he cried, "Ah, my prince of the powers of the air! welcome! ever welcome to Zwingler, but more especially at this time, when a most wonderful phase of your art, that is to say, of mine, or the devil's, or some of his imps', for what I know, has just been perpetrated through my innocent

instrumentality." The little man whilst speaking manifested all the feverish excitement of an actor anxious to overdo his part, at the same time obviously desirous to interest his listener, as one of whom he stood in some awe. Without paying any attention to this speech, Professor Marx, turning to me, said calmly, "Louis, this is Zwinger."

"Adept!" (to Zwinger) "a pupil of mine, for whose benefit I wish you to recite some little fragments of your experience;" then, seating himself upon the table from which the Bohemian had dismounted, and motioning me to a stool by his side, he proceeded, addressing the notary, to whom he had slightly nodded, "Well, Herr Reinhardt, what new discoveries has our lively little sleuth-hound been making?"

"O, nothing out of the common line, Professor," replied the other, in a grave official drawl. "We've caught the murderer of Frau Ebenstein; that's all."

"That's all!" cried the Bohemian, with a tone and gesture of almost frantic excitement. "That's all, is it? Slave of the dull earth, and the duller prison watch and ward! All is it, to traverse nearly two hundred miles of ground, cross three rivers, plunge through marshes, scale mountain heights, pierce the forest, sink through the cavern's depths, and toss on the roaring rapids of the terrific Schwartz cataract; and still never to lose — no, not for a single moment — the scent of an invisible and unknown mortal, whom these eyes had never beheld, whom these hands had never touched, and of whom no sign, no symbol, no token in the realms of earthly existence could be found, except by me, Zwinger!"

As he spoke, he beat his breast, and elevated his glittering black eye to the heavens in an attitude of half-ecstatic frenzy.

The notary, without the slightest change of feature,

continued to write, wholly unmindful of his rhapsody ; but Professor Marx, fixing his deep, piercing dark eyes upon the Bohemian, said in a calm, soothing tone, as if he were attempting to subdue a fractious child, " You are a marvelous being, indeed, Zwingler, and that all the world knows. Come now ! there's a good fellow, tell us all about it. Sit down — no, not there — there, at my feet ; so — that will do. Now, relate the whole story ; we will listen most patiently, and admire most fervently," he added, speaking aside to me in Spanish. " Remember, I have not seen you for two months, and only yesterday heard that you had returned in triumph from your long pilgrimage. When I was last here, the tidings had just reached us that Frau Ebenstein, the rich widow of Baden Baden had been foully murdered, her house sacked and plundered, and her destroyer " —

" An unknown," broke in the notary, as if impatient to recite details which were specially in the line of his duty ; " an unknown, whether male or female also unknown, but supposed to be the former on account of blood-stained footprints, marks of a large thumb and finger on neck of the deceased, and a torn neckerchief, evidently a man's, part of which was clutched in the fingers of said deceased, and part of which was found beneath the couch, saturated with gore, and rent, as if in a violent struggle."

As the speaker proceeded, strong shudderings seized the frame of the Bohemian, though the hand of Professor Marx, laid lightly on his shoulder, for a time subdued the spasms, and quelled them into slight shiverings ; but when the neckerchief was mentioned, the little creature's excitement was frightful to behold. He writhed like an eel beneath the touch of the Professor, who at last, raising his hand, said quietly, " Now, Zwingler, proceed ! Tell the rest in your own way."

" Yes, yes ! I will tell," he cried. " I always do. When

did I ever fail? Answer me that, prince of the air; answer me!"

"Never, my king of adepts; but go on."

"They brought me that neckerchief, then, mein Herren," he continued, as if addressing a vast assembly, but without looking at any of the loungers in the outer apartment, who now closed up about him; "and lo! as I clutched it, I saw — yes, instantly I saw, a dark-browed, broad-shouldered Dutch serving-man; the man of blood; the man who did the deed; I swear it! I saw him do it. I saw him, and the whole act; and O! how horrible it was! how cruel! how cowardly! and the poor, poor old Frau! I saw her too — saw her struggle, plead, choke, die! All this I saw, — out of that neckerchief, mein Herren! Instantly, as I touched it, it came like a flash, a flash of darkness, but full of the scene I describe, and full, too, of all its horror! Gott in Himmel! Then it went as all scenes do after the flash I get of them as I touch the thing; after that I said, 'Give me my shoes; I must walk far. Put me a cup, to scoop up water with, in my wallet; give me my staff, and let me go.' I had been hungry, and was about to dine, but I hungered no more; no, not for seven long days did I touch other food than the nuts and berries close to the path streaked with the murderer's life, and the water of the rivers, streams, and cataract he had crossed; but I will tell you all. Listen! As I made to go, I chose my path as I always do, because a long black line seemed to stream out from the neckerchief I held in my hand, and point ever on the way I should go. It led me through the city; it pointed me into a low inn where he had stopped to rest. I told them such a man had been there. They shuddered, and said to one another, 'Zwinger!' and then to me, 'He has been and gone.' I knew it; but the way he had taken was still pointed by the black line. I know what

you were going to say, Professor; *I see your thought*; you want to know if I see the line I speak of with my eyes, my very eyes, or my soul's eyes. I reply, 'With both.' My soul feels the line, and it draws me on, and seems like a cord dragging at the object I hold, and pulling me in the direction I must take to arrive at the owner of that object. Sometimes I seem to see the line, and then I do not feel it pull, but it never leaves one sense or the other—sight or feeling—until I abandon the object, or find the person to whom it has belonged. Well, sirs, thus it led me on, day and night, never suffering me to get out of *his* track. It guided me through several villages and some towns, and wherever it was the thickest and most palpable, there he had stopped to take rest or refreshment, and there I said, 'Such and such a man has been here,' and they answered with a shudder, 'Zwinger! he has come and gone.'

"I rested sometimes, but ever on the ground—the ground he had trodden; and then the black, vapory cord seemed to coil up all around me like a misty garment. I tried to rest once on a bed he had occupied, but O heaven! all the scene of the murder was there. I heard her shriek, I saw her struggle, and what was still more horrible, it seemed to me that I was the murderer, and was actually doing the deed over again! I fled from the place, and should have lost the track, had I not returned to it again, and started afresh from that house."

"To one like me, Professor, that house will always be haunted; that is, until the murderer's shade melts away from it,—and it will do so in time. I answer your thought again, you see, Professor! It was near midnight, some time—I cannot tell how long—after I had started, that the black cord began to thicken and spread, and at length to assume the shape of a man."

"It trembled and quivered, and at first was only the in-

distinct outline of a man, but presently it grew more and more dense, and now behold! it was the ghost of the Dutch serving-man in full, walking just so far before me, above the ground one foot, and ever looking over its shoulder at something coming after it. That man went to a great many places in the town I was now hunting through, for the ghost was at every street corner, and in every alley, and lurking in all the dark lanes and by-streets, and though I knew he must be close at hand, by the density of the ghost, still he had wandered and wandered and lurked about in so many places, that I should have become confused, had not both senses been suddenly appealed to at once. I saw him, and at last I felt him. I felt him as it were, tugging at the neckerchief in my hand, and striving — O holy martyrs! how he strove to get it away from me!

"Sirs, he was just then thinking about that neckerchief, remembering he had lost it in the murdered lady's room, and wishing he had got it, and cursing his folly, and mentally longing, longing to get it back. Lucky for me he did think thus, for his thought, being set on the neckerchief, pulled at it so frantically that it led me straight to his hiding-place, and there and then when I saw him, and screamed that that was the murderer of Frau Ebenstein, and the landlord and guests of the inn cried 'Zwinger, Zwinger!' he uttered a great cry, and fell as if he had been struck; and then it was they captured him and brought him thither."

"Aye! and the strangest fact of all this is, gentlemen," broke in the grave notary, unable to keep silence any longer, "that this wretch had changed his dress ever so many times, and when this wonderful Bohemian here tracked him to his lair, he was disguised as a sailor, and so disguised that none but the devil, or perhaps his particular ally, Zwinger, could have found him out."

"Pshaw!" replied the Bohemian, scornfully; "what know you burghers of my art? I do not track the clothes of the man, but the man; his soul was in his hand, on his neck, and in the neckerchief around it, when he did the deed."

"The sleuth-hound senses the soul of a man through the organ of smell. I sense it through smell, touch, taste, sight, and hearing. I sense soul through perception. Everything, every place, where soul has been, is full of it; and once give me a link, a single thread of association, such as an object the soul I would track out has come into contact with, and the depths of the sea cannot hide it; the mountains cannot cover it; the disguise of a monarch, or the rags of a beggar cannot conceal the identity of the man whose soul Zwingler would track out. But remember *mein Herren*, Zwingler tracks souls, not masking habits."

The little Bohemian's slight form seemed to expand as he spoke with impassioned gesture and rapid utterance, into the proportions of a giant; and as he turned away to reply to some question addressed to him by one of his admiring auditors, the Professor murmured in my ear, "He has detected more criminals in this way than all the constabulary of Germany. Give him but a garment, a lock of hair, or even a rag that has come in contact with a living organism, and he will track out its owner with a fidelity unmatched by the best blood-hound that ever ran;" then addressing the Bohemian, he said aloud; "Glorious Zwingler! as wise as you are gifted, tell my foolish young son here what you mean by a soul; he is eager to learn of you what soul really is."

"Soul is the life, my prince; you know that," replied Zwingler, half daunted, as he always seemed to be when addressing Professor Marx.

"You think, then, soul is first the life principle, and

nothing more, That which keeps the man alive; is that so?"

"What else can it be?"

"But what is the 'black cord' you speak of; what the essence which clings to substances, and enables you to describe, or sense the person from whom it has flowed out?"

"The soul, of course, great master."

"Is the soul then a substance?"

"Is the air a substance? the wind a substance? You cannot see or feel either, until they come into contact with some other substance, and when they do, although invisible, you know they are something. The soul is finer than air, thinner and more ethereal than wind; and only some souls as fine and pure as mine, can sense it. But when a Marx can sense the air, and feel the wind, a Zwingler can sense the soul, and feel its substance."

"Admirable, my little philosopher! and now, one question more. What do you suppose becomes of the soul, after a man dies?"

"Pshaw, learned master! Why ask me so foolish a question? What becomes of the body after a man dies; why not ask me that?"

"Why not indeed?" muttered the Professor, glancing triumphantly at me; "but, Zwingler, if the form of a soul can appear whilst a man lives, can it not and does it not appear sometimes, after death?"

"Does not the body appear, too, if you look for it? Surely it does not all fade away at once, but decays and corrupts and at last disappears. No doubt soul and body both wear away, fade out, and melt into their original elements when they become separated, as at death. No doubt, too, some can see only the body, and some like Zwingler can see the soul as well; but both live only when they are together, and die when they are apart;"

then contracting his singularly mobile features into a frown of impatience, he cried irritably, "But why torment me, and make me talk about things which only you great Professors understand? I hate to think of death! I loathe it! I—I—fear it! I wish I could live forever!" He was about to dart away, when Professor Marx laid a hand gently on his arm; the Bohemian stood as if transfixed, and muttered submissively, "What more would you have of me, great Professor?"

"Only to accept this slight token of my young friend's gratitude for your instructive narrative, adept," replied the Professor; and as he spoke, Herr Marx suddenly snatched from me the locket and ribbon of poor Constance, which I held as he had desired during the interview in my right hand, and which he now as suddenly placed in Zwinger's.

Before I could pronounce a word of protest against this unexpected and unwelcome transfer, the Bohemian clutched at the ornament with an action so fearfully spasmodic and full of terror, that the words I would have uttered died on my lips. "Death again!" he murmured with a strangely piteous accent. "Ever surrounded with the faded blossoms of dead souls! But ah me! this was a cruel death! so young, so fair, so innocent; and destroyed too by the hand of him who should have been her protector! Herr Professor, I shall not have far to go, to trace the soul of him who did this deed of blood."

"Hush, little dreamer!" responded the Professor in a low whisper; "your art is not wanted here. Stay! I will change the token. Keep this, and be silent, or worse will come of it." So saying, he took back the locket, returning it to me, and, placing several gold pieces in the Bohemian's hand, led me through the crowd, who opened reverentially to permit the learned and celebrated Professor Marx to pass through. At home again, and in our

quiet, lodgings, the ominous silence of the last hour between Professor Marx and myself was thus broken:—

"What think you of Zwinger, my Louis?"

"What think you of the death, or rather *the murder*, of Constance Müller, my master?"

"Ever harping on a worn-out theme, and irrevocable past, silly boy! Science must, will, and shall have its martyrs, Louis, and woe to the progress of the race when idle emotion erects itself to match the interests of science. Enough, once and forever, of this. What think you of Zwinger?"

"He fails to convince me that an apparition of a soul after death is only an apparition."

"Then, what is it before death?"

"Aye! that is the question!"

"Zwinger's mode of philosophizing is crude enough," replied Herr Marx; "but the philosophy itself is unanswerable. Like the lower elementary, and the higher planetary spirits, the soul of man, the finest and most sublimated condition in which matter exists, inheres to all coarser forms, and thus it can be sensed, as Zwinger calls it, as a sphere, sometimes in a premonition of its approach, sometimes in the feeling of indescribable repulsion or attraction which we conceive for strangers even as we approach them. Sometimes it can be seen in bodily shape, apart from the body, as in the case of the 'double' or 'atmospheric spirit,' and sometimes it can be seen when it has separated entirely from the body, ere it is quite resolved back again into its original elements. And that is all."

"And that is all?" I mechanically repeated, feeling, however, at the same time, that the Professor was merely reciting a lesson in a form of words familiar to him, whilst his spirit was strangely abstracted, and his manner vague and wandering as my own when I repeated his last words.

I am now an old man, and have realized to the full that I shall soon be called upon to give account of every light or untruthful word I may ever have spoken. Think not then, O my reader! if any eye but my own should ever peruse these lines, that with this deep sense of my eternal responsibility to the spirit of truth, I could falsify it in one iota of what I am now about to relate. As the Professor and myself relapsed into deep silence, a chiming as of very distant bells was heard in the air; a singular radiance stole through the dim twilight obscurity of our chamber, and settled about the table strewn with books, at which in the past morning I had been studying. That radiance at first appeared like a shimmering fire-mist; then it expanded, bent, curled, and at last seemed to weave itself into the proportions of a human form. Clearer, brighter, stronger grew the vision; at length the mists rose and parted on either side, disclosing the shining apparition and seraphic features of the dead Constance. Turning her head of sunny glory towards me, she smiled, then bent over the table, seemed to select with swift action a large Lutheran Bible from a heap of books, opened it, took up the locket and black ribbon I had laid down near it, placed the ribbon like a mark across a certain passage, pointed to it emphatically three times, then with such a smile as a mortal could scarcely look upon and live, she vanished from my sight, and all was darkness.

What followed, or how long I may have remained unconscious of life and being, after this vision, I know not; but my first recognition of passing events was the sound of Herr Marx's voice speaking through the thick darkness of night which had fallen upon us, saying, —

"Louis! are you awake? Surely, I must have had a long sleep, for the night has stolen upon me unawares."

The janitor at this moment entered with lights, and

placed them on a side-board. The Professor, rising from his seat, took one of the lamps and advancing to the table held it over the open Bible, at the same time exclaiming in a voice of singular agitation, "Who has marked these passages?"

I advanced, looked over his shoulder, and saw him remove the ribbon and locket, only to disclose several deep black lines, drawn as if with Indian ink, beneath the following words, in different parts of the fifteenth chapter of the First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians.

"There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."

"Behold I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed."

"Death is swallowed up in victory."

"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

**SPIRITUAL FOOTPRINTS IN THE HOME.—MR. CHAS.
LEVY.**

BY VESPER.

THE astounding progress of Spiritualism, in its brief career of only one quarter of a century, will never be fully explained to posterity until we lift the veil which obscures the patient, but indefatigable labors that have been performed in its behalf by private individuals. Dotted all over the land may be found faithful men and women, who, endowed with gifts as rare, and powers as exceptional, as any of the better known public mediums, have yet toiled on in quiet, unrecognized humility, performing services which have ramified as widely, and flowed as freely through the veins and arteries of society, as any of those most widely known to fame. It would be impossible to understand the genius of Spiritualism thoroughly, unless such labors as these are acknowledged, neither will posterity ever appreciate the true nature of the benefactions bequeathed to it by this age, until grateful mention is made of these unrecognized workers.

As a representative of an immense and most praiseworthy class of these gentle laborers we devote a few pages to a sketch of Mr. Charles Levy, a gentleman holding an official position of honor and responsibility in St. Louis, Mo., and one who, from the first dark days, when it was tantamount to social ostracism to avow a belief in Spiritualism, fearlessly and manfully upheld its white standard, and steadily and faithfully devoted his mediumistic gifts to the exposition of its truths and principles.

Mr. Levy's first experiences in the communion took place in 1852, when he attended several of the Misses Fox's séances on the occasion of their visit to St. Louis, and ultimately became convinced that the intelligence spelled out through the rappings could not have been given from any mundane source. At one of the sittings aforesaid, the communicating spirit stated that Mr. Levy would be a "writing medium," and gave directions for the development of his powers by sittings, etc. Obeying these instructions, the neophyte was perplexed and at first horrified to find himself exercised in a very different way from what he had expected. Writing to a friend, he says:—

"I had not been seated more than a minute or two, when, to my utter astonishment, my hand and arm became agitated and moved up and down with an irresistible force, and a velocity only equal to the motion of a steam-engine. This wonderful and preternatural motion was kept up without pause, during the whole of the three quarters of an hour I sat at the desk, and to behold such a phenomenon acted out in my own organism, entirely without any volition on my part, reminded me of nothing less than the song of the 'steam arm,' and certainly was enough to convince any responsible man of my size and years, that something besides myself was the origin of such a piece of marvelous gymnasticism."

For two weeks following this first experiment, the "steam arm" worked with the same extraordinary force and velocity at any séance in which Mr. Levy engaged, whether alone or in company. Sometimes one, two, or three persons would work with all their force upon this piece of human mechanism, in the endeavor to stay it, but though they might succeed in restraining the power to a trifling extent, they could not arrest it, and when the pressure was removed, the arm, as if springing back with added momentum, would increase in the speed and force of its motions tenfold. Mr. Levy having taken all the advice upon his remarkable case that the ignorance of the times could afford him, and finding that in the trip-

hammer motions of his wonderful arm, no sign of intelligence or shadow of writing mediumship could be evolved, finally laid his case once more before the spirits at Miss Fox's circles. When Mr. Levy presented himself before the oracle, the Misses Fox and about a dozen of their sitters who had never at that time seen a "writing medium," or imagined what it could mean, requested that the arm gymnastic should be performed for their benefit; but when they beheld it, and were informed that the entertainment sometimes lasted as much as forty minutes, they were so frightened at what they witnessed that they all entreated the invisible performers to desist, a request which was at once complied with. At this séance, the promise was renewed that Mr. Levy should become a "writing medium," and the time set for the fulfillment was two weeks. At the period named, and within a few minutes of the time at which the promise had been given, the locomotive arm being then at high pressure, and working with all the force and velocity of a lightning engine, suddenly stopped. The hand (which, it must be remarked, was always during these performances cold as a stone, whilst all the rest of the frame would be at fever heat) holding a pencil over a piece of paper without any volition or consciousness on the part of the performer, was found to have inscribed at the two lower corners of a sheet of paper, the words — "one" — and "ever." Whilst the medium was wondering what these words might mean, the automatic hand seemed to be seized with the old power and made to inscribe with immense speed, some words between the two corners, which when finished read as follows: "One and ever with you." The specialty of this writing was the fact, however, that all the letters were beautifully formed, and composed of an infinitesimal number of dots executed as above stated with the rapidity of lightning. From this

time Mr. Levy wrote a vast number of messages to himself and his friends, involving excellent and conclusive tests of spirit presence, although they were not of a sufficiently uncommon character in these late days of the communion, to justify their insertion here. At times, the letters in these messages would be given in *fac-similes* of the spirits' handwritings,—at others, elaborately ornamented with flourishes, and for weeks fashioned with the singular dots above mentioned, and executed with superhuman rapidity. Mr. Levy was neither selfish nor chary of his newly acquired powers. He kindly and cheerfully sat for his friends and acquaintances, whenever solicited to do so, and as in addition to the supermundane manner of the writings performed, innumerable tests of spirit presence and identity were given, it may be estimated that many and many a darkened mind beside his own, received the assurances of immortality, through his willing service. Mr. Levy's next phase of mediumship was the power of answering questions, spoken and mental, by motions of the hand.

In this way many persons, without uttering a word aloud, would sit and converse with their spirit friends, simply asking mental questions, and receiving, either through writing, motions of the medium's hand, or spoken sentences, correct replies.

On one occasion, a gentleman being delegated by several of the citizens of a town in the county of Chariton, Missouri, to visit St. Louis for the purpose of ascertaining if the wonders there reported of could not be accounted for by animal magnetism, made several attempts to place Mr. Levy under his influence, but in this he not only signally failed, but received numbers of correct responses to his silent questions, and finally the name of his father written out by the medium's hand. This last named test he had mentally requested; he was puzzled however to

find that the name was spelt wrong, a *ruse* on the part of the spirit as he afterwards explained, to prove that though he complied with his son's unspoken wish, he did it in that way to prove that the medium did not write under psychological impression. Still another phase of the power fell to Mr. Levy's share, and this was the pantomimical representation of the peculiarities of manner, habits, and appearance of deceased persons, and these acted out so graphically, that it was impossible to mistake the identity of the controlling influence.

Being in company on one occasion with Mr. and Mrs. McMillan of the St. Louis theatre, Mr. Levy faithfully delineated in pantomimic action their late manager, his appearance, manners, dress, and even a fall he had experienced in his lifetime, so that it was impossible to mistake the fact, that either Mr. Field, or some invisible intelligence thoroughly acquainted with that gentleman, was personating him with all the force and reality of his actual presence. Mr. Levy, shortly after this, sat for a party of some fourteen persons of the theatrical profession, including ladies and gentlemen of the highest talent and standing. At this circle Mrs. Sillsbee, the widow of the famous comedian, received the names of her brothers, and an imitation of the profession and death scene of her sailor brother, who was drowned at sea. Mr. C——, a very celebrated actor present, sat for a considerable time receiving correct answers to his mental questions, besides having the name of his little boy written and a graphic delineation of some of his childish sports, which moved every one present with sympathy. Amongst the number of remarkable personations given by Mr. Levy in his numerous sittings, we select the following case as one of the most striking and illustrative of that phase known as personating mediumship. We shall give the narrative in Mr. Levy's own simple and unstudied phraseology.

"Being in Charlottesville, Virginia, in June, 1857, and having spent a week there, my sister-in-law invited me, on the evening previous to my departure, to spend it with her; she had at her house on that occasion a party of about thirty persons. In the course of the evening it was by some one suggested that 'we hold a circle,' but on appealing to me I strenuously refused, conceiving it impossible in such a mixed assemblage to be controlled advantageously. I acceded however, at last, reluctantly to their request. We had not been seated many minutes, when I was suddenly seized by an influence impelling me to get up and go outside the circle, to a table upon which were placed several books. I proceeded to take up, one at a time, six books. After laying them down again I carried the seventh to my sister-in-law and placed it in her hands, at the same time calling her particular attention to it by various significant signs. I then commenced parting and smoothing my hair down like a lady's, imitating the action of a fashionably dressed female. I was then led to the mantel-piece and taking down two large vases, carried them to the table and turning them upside down emptied therefrom on the table two piles of small pieces of rocks. I picked up seven of the pieces, and passing to seven persons, handed a piece to each one. I then went to a certain part of the room and imitated a circular drawing, and pointed above it several times; I was then led to another part of the room where I did the same, only I made the sign of a square instead of a circular drawing, pointing up as before. I then went to an elderly lady, patting her on the cheek and showing other marks of affection. I was then again led outside of the circle, impelled to take up a large family Bible, and turning it over several times, I took therefrom a beautifully worked mark for books, and handed it to the lady. She first read the side I held to her, when I took it again, turned it over, and handed back the other side. The lady then said (as by this time they all recognized who the spirit was); with tears in her eyes, that when I was acting towards her so sympathizingly, she thought, 'Shall we meet in heaven?' That mark I showed her was made, when on earth, by the spirit influencing me, the 'lady's daughter;' the words on the side I first presented to her were, 'Shall we meet in heaven,' on the opposite side were the words, 'Hope answers yes.' (This daughter had passed into the spirit world between two and three years prior to that time, a young lady between 18 and 19 years of age.) The "seventh book" which I carried and handed to my sister-in-law (who was married to the spirit's brother) was a book presented to her by the spirit when on earth. At the close of the séance they who knew the spirit well, informed me the parting my hair and other actions gave me the appearance, and formed a complete representation of her, so much so, that although they had never seen anything of the kind before, this brought her up to them vividly. The rocks in the

vases were brought from a noted cave in Virginia by a party of friends of the spirit, who intended to accompany them on their pleasure trip, had she not been prevented by sickness. The 'seven pieces' selected and handed to each one, were presented to the spirit by the very persons to whom I handed them, and each one who received them actually identified the separate piece, as the veritable one he or she had given. My sister-in-law also explained, that in the room overhead, hung two pictures one circular and one square; they were placed in the precise spots I had indicated by pointing upwards, and were given to her by the lady whose spirit was then influencing me."

Several other tests of a similar character were given during this séance but our space will not permit our making farther extracts from Mr. Levy's unassuming journal.

Mr. Levy has frequently acted out in séances an artless child, imitating her manner, dressing up his hair with flowers, and in a totally strange house searching out from secret repositories the toys of the loved and lost, that were sacredly hidden away from sight, and spreading them out as the little one had been wont to do. Before the astonished and deeply moved parents could regain their self-possession at these unmistakable tokens of an angel's presence, the influence would change to a preacher, a physician, a choir master, and all sorts of other characters known to, and immediately recognized by, those present, as their deceased friends. The clothes some had worn, or made, or those which were of a peculiar shape or color, were too minutely pictured forth to be mistaken. The last phase we can notice of this useful medium's varied endowments was the occasional influence to give directions for the healing of the sick, which in several instances restored to life and health precious beings who hung trembling on the verge of the grave, and who were carrying the sunlight of their loving friends' existence away with them.

Mr. Levy closes up a modest and greatly understated summary of his experiences by these words:

"I answer the question, 'What good has Spiritualism done?' by affirming, it has done far more for me, than I can ever do for it."

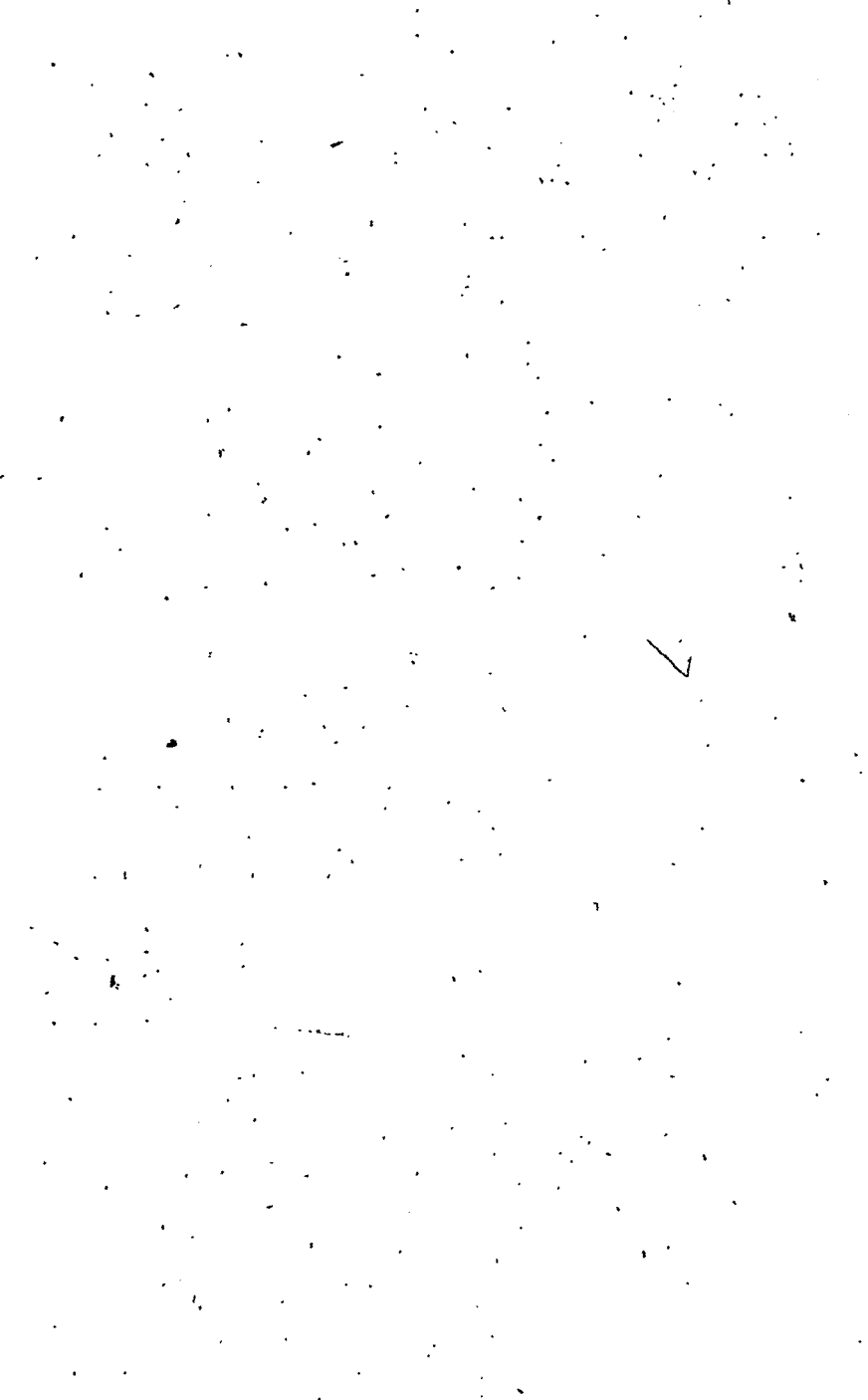
This may still be a matter of question in Mr. Levy's case.

Many years of a blameless life and honorable character, devoted to the enlightenment of the race on the despised problem of immortality; bereaved parents and orphaned children, reunited in the bonds of undying love; broken hearts bound up, weeping eyes dried, suffering ones restored to life and health, criminals warned back from the shoals and reefs of sin, and feeble ones stayed by angel counsel and guidance in the hour when they were sinking and ready to perish; all these results form no slight record for one who in the quiet paths of private life has had none to chronicle his good deeds, many to blame, and very few to praise his steady devotion to our unpopular cause.

"I must often have appeared very foolish I know," Mr. Levy writes, "for when acting out the pantomimical representations of spirits, I did not even know their meaning, nor to what aim I was acting, but I was quite reconciled when the poor spirit seemed so glad to be recognized, and the poor mortal lookers-on seemed so overwhelmed with joy and astonishment, to find their dead alive again." What a world of heart compensation is implied in these simple words!

Mr. Levy's position as a public officer was doubtless often jeopardized; his neighbors' good opinion was often sacrificed; his own feelings were frequently wounded, and his time and means consumed in his voluntary field of labor; but if there is a land of compensation "over there," and a treasury in which a thousand notes dishonored by man's ingratitude here become precious coin of the realm hereafter, the subject of our sketch has been laying up for

himself riches, which cannot "make to themselves wings and flee away," and accumulating stores of indebtedness which a grateful posterity, and the world of glorified spirits, will both delight to repay a thousand fold.



AMONGST THE SPIRITS; OR, SKETCHES OF SPIRITUAL
MEN, WOMEN, SPIRITS, AND THINGS. }

PART III.

BY ASMODEUS.

GOTHAM.

It was sometime about the middle of the nineteenth century, no matter at what more precise period, that I found myself "amongst the spirits" in their chief, strong-hold and largest western emporium, New York city.

Bewildered with the multitude of attractive points that seemed to be drawing me into Spiritual "vortices" on every side, I rushed so eagerly from one to another that my memory is confused, and I become, as it were, "entranced" in the attempt to disentangle them; hence, the highly succinct style of my previous narratives may here seem to fail, and the reader must not feel surprised if my descriptions at this juncture are a little on the trance-speaking order, slightly mixed up. My first visit was to the New York conference, held in a good-sized room, in a somewhat dingy quarter of the town, but nevertheless illumined by the attendance of sundry of the great lights of "the cause."

The moment I got into this august assembly, I felt I was in truth "amongst the spirits." At the moment when I stole tiptoe into the awful presence, a jovial, pleasant-looking gentleman, with a clean-shaved, comely face and rotund form occupied the floor, and was busily engaged in narrating to the company some of his very remarkable

and interesting experiences in magnetization. "The Doctor," for such I found was the title by which my agreeable friend was recognized, then gave place to a gentleman from Troy, who poured forth such a narrative of Spiritual performances that every hair on my head (fortunately there are not many) rose to the perpendicular, and remained there-throughout the whole of the tale of enchantment. According to this gentleman's account, the spirits could control his pet medium to speak every language, known and unknown, especially the latter; cause him to make a pleasant breakfast upon one hundred grains of arsenic, and pronounce his digestion improved thereby; ride a small party of six fat gentlemen on the end of a piano, and write communications upside down, inside out, from the bottom to the top of the paper, from the middle to the circumference, and then all round; and finally, all such writings were either the work of Socrates, or some Greek sage of equal, if not greater repute. Another gentleman arose to express his belief in Spiritualism, on the ground that his grandmother had appeared to a medium, and identified herself by the peculiar cut of her cap, the jerk of her knitting-needles, and the waxed ends of her spectacle-frames. Hereupon a choleric little man started to his feet to insist that the last speaker's fact was no fact at all; that is to say, it involved no test, as grandmothers always appeared in frilled caps, were universally addicted to knitting, and commonly wore waxed-end spectacles, whenever the ends wanted waxing. Before he could finish his exposition of the grandmother question, half a dozen peacemakers started up to protest, in the loudest and most emphatic way, that Brother Black was always making a disturbance and putting the spirits down, and for their parts, they considered the fact of the waxed ends to the spectacles as incontrovertible proof, and they only wished the

Tribune would come out like a man, and publish such a startling evidence of immortality. Hereupon the *Tribune*, who, it seems, happened to be present (that is to say, in the person of one of the corps of that distinguished organ); called the attention of the disputants to the fact that the spirits were themselves there, as was manifest from the very distinct shower of raps that every now and then emphasized the utterances of the speakers, and sounded very much to the ears of the initiated like an attempt to represent a hearty fit of spirit-rapping laughter. It was evident to me that the *Tribune* wished to create a diversion from the awkward allusion to the suggestion of publishing the spectacle test in his columns; if this was his purpose, it succeeded admirably, for in an instant a dozen eager heads were bent down to the ground on which the raps were sounding, and a dozen voices were heard propounding the usual queries.

"Is that you Hezekiah?" "Jemima, if that's you, rap three times." "Annie, can't you rap upon my back comb, as you did last night?" "Augustus John, are you happy?" "Maria Seraphina, didn't you tell me you was in the seventh sphere? If you are, rap out your age when you died."

As the party last addressed seemed the only one disposed to respond, and her age, as we were afterwards informed, was ninety-eight and a half, before the test was finished, the speaking was under way again, and the jolly Doctor suggested that, as there was a question up before the conference, it might be as well to reserve the experiences of the brothers and sisters for another occasion, and stick to the text. Anxious to find out, if I could, what that text was, and deeming it must be something of the most vital importance to the human race, I ventured to ask in a low whisper of my next neighbor, if he could enlighten me.

"Sorry I can't help you, sir," the party interrogated responded; "for my part, I never was the least enlightened at these conferences, and never expect to be. There's no use in Spiritualism, that I can see, unless it leads to moral purity — to moral purity, sir; that's all there is to Spiritualism, sir, depend upon it."

"What did I hear about 'moral purity'?" cried the good-natured chairman (the Doctor aforesaid). "What, is our friend on the moral purity plane there? Come brother, let's hear from you! Tell us how we shall attain to moral purity. I think the information would do some of us good."

"Tell us, if you please, Doctor," replied my neighbor gravely, "what is the question of the night? Here's a stranger here, anxious to be informed."

"A stranger, eh?" "A stranger!" "A stranger!" was echoed and reechoed from every part of the room, whilst all eyes were directed towards me until I blushed up to the roots of the fringe round my head, and felt the bald place at the top of it becoming fiery.

"Perhaps the brother would give us some of his experiences," suggested the gentleman from Troy.

"Perhaps he would take part in the question of the night," resumed the chairman. "Our subject, sir, is this: 'Is truth a substance?' What may your opinion be, sir, on that head?"

"My opinion! my opinion, sir!" I stammered. "O, I assure you it's not worth mentioning; in fact, I don't happen to have an opinion upon that subject at all." But even as I spoke, I felt the cowardice of my retreat, and perceiving that I was in an assembly expressly convened for the purpose of mutual feeling of some kind, I determined to give utterance to something, and, in desperation, plunged into the only sentence which occurred to me at that moment, in connection with the word truth — which was,

"Tell the truth and shame the ——." Providentially for my credit in that company of sages, at this moment one of the prophets was suddenly seized with the divine afflatus, and, starting up in the attitude and with the tone of a Hebrew Boanerges, thundered forth, —

"I am John C. Calhoun. Listen, children of earth, to the voice of the immortals. Truth crushed to earth" — Here I took advantage of the retreat of at least one half of the company, who rose precipitately, as "the great medium" appeared in their midst under influence, and, moving with the throng, gained the passage that led into the street, with a feeling very much akin to relief at my escape.

As I was hurrying forward in school-boy fashion, I felt myself arrested by the voice of a brother, asking me in a sharp, inquisitive tone, "How do you like our conference, sir?"

"O, amazingly!" I exclaimed; "the most interesting meeting I ever attended in — in — my experience."

"Then, why did you go away from it so soon?" he abruptly asked.

"Why did you?" I responded, equally curtly.

"Because it's slow, sir — unendurably slow, and twaddly; and because real good speakers" — here he bridled up considerably — "have no chance there; and because they don't go in for Spiritualism half the time, but just for such metaphysical old stuff as, Is truth a substance? Is love a substance? 'Pshaw! that's not Spiritualism, any more than the experiences of all the old grannies that come in there to talk 'Munchausen' and the 'Arabian Night's Entertainments' is Spiritualism."

"I grant," I replied, "that it seems a kind of heterogeneous affair, sadly lacking order and design, and" —

"Order and design, sir! Why, speak those words in the ear of a Spiritualist, and you will instantly be la-

beled 'Fogy' and set down as a fossil of the Silurian ages. According to most of the Spiritualists of my acquaintance, sir, Spiritualism has come to break up everything in the shape of order; knock down, rend, destroy, pitch into, and denounce everything and everybody that has the least tendency to order, or favors the least particle of design."

"But nature, sir," I ventured to plead, "nature is all order, and God's works everywhere manifest design."

"Stranger!" said my new acquaintance in a half comic, half pitying tone, "where on earth do you come from? Are you a Spiritualist?"

"I hope so, sir," I replied enthusiastically, "but what then?"

"A Spiritualist, and talking about nature and God as authorities! That is, about any nature but your own, or any god but the god within! O sir! be assured you are your only authority if you are a true Spiritualist! Believe me, sir, the time has come when every individual is to be a law unto himself, and to own no other law; I am the great I am; you are, nothing to me, but everything to yourself, of course.

"Nature's a humbug, sir, except the nature within you; and as to God — my venerable friend, God's out of fashion; the name's obsolete, the thing's played out. When we progressionists speak of causation, we speak of it as causation and nothing more; perhaps, according to some, it is a 'principle,' perhaps a 'law.' Some go so far as to call it the great positive mind, and some even admit it is the great central centrifugal point of the universe; but as an authority sir, — why, the thing won't work; at least, not in this age of individualism."

"May I ask, sir," I ventured to hint, as soon as I could get in a word edgeways, "if these are your own sentiments, or the opinions of the parties we have just heard

clamoring — that is, I mean to say — discussing, in yonder conference?"

"Sir," replied my tall, good-looking companion, with an oratorical flourish, "these are not sentiments, nor yet opinions; they are Spiritualism."

"O!" I ejaculated aloud. "Hurrah!" I cried mentally. "Now I shall learn what Spiritualism really is;" then to my companion. "Pray go on, sir; I sit at your feet and learn."

"Where are you going, sir?" said my friend abruptly enough, but still with an accent of kindness in his clear, pleasant voice.

"Seeking the spirits, wherever they may be found," was my truthful response.

"Good," said my new ally, cheerfully; "I'm with you, and will introduce you into the very arcanum where they do most abound. My name is George Orrin Anson Head, usually called for short by the initials of my name, Go-ahead."

"Most appropriate!" I murmured; "mine is Asmodeus, commonly called Asa Slow."

"Most appropriate!" rejoined my amiable friend, raising his hat and offering me his arm.

In ten minutes we had scaled an indefinite number of stairs, and stood within a spacious, oblong room, with benches sloping up from the middle, all of which were filled with a crowd of intelligent-looking men and women, amongst whom I noticed that nearly all the men wore long hair, and nearly all the women short.

In the middle of the room was a tall, ungainly-looking man, with a set of good features, but the most mobile expression I ever beheld. At one moment he was severe as a judge; anon, sarcastic as a Voltaire, and again, comic as a Grimaldi. He was discoursing, as we entered, in an exceedingly fluent strain, on the absurdities of Spiritualism.

or Spiritualists, I could hardly tell which; certain it is that in the very midst of his railing vein; he was seized with what my companion informed me was "the influence" of a hunchback, and thereupon he writhed his tall body into a thing not above four feet high, and crooked as the letter S. In this marvelous state of transformation, "the medium," for such he was said to be, though an involuntary one, crawled along the room amidst the mirthful cheers of the bystanders, mimicking to perfection the attitude and manner of a deformed dwarf.

Recovering from this spell as suddenly as it had seized him, he now began to erect his body again, and recommence his diatribe against Spiritualism, all the time protesting the recent exhibition was not, made by his will, but by some power outside himself, "but as to what that power was" — and here he was again transformed, but this time into the most perfect caricature of a Chinaman. Snatching a light scarf from one of his female neighbors, he stuck it in a trice at the back of his head, pig-tail fashion, and, after imitating the Chinese method of salutation, commenced to pour forth for the edification of the company a string of vocal clatter which somebody present said was Chinese. Before this versatile performer could get out of his Chinese trance and proceed with his wide-awake denunciation, a war-whoop from the other end of the apartment gave notice that the floor must now be given up to Contrepot, king of some tribe which sounded to my uninstructed ears like "Rowdy-ohs." This diversion gave me an opportunity of asking my friend Go-ahead whether he thought the last medium was a reality, or only an effect. "It would be difficult to answer you," he replied. "Yon man is a shrewd fellow; makes his living as a peddler, not unfrequently as a cheap John, and occasionally as a street orator. He is a good subject for the spirits of his own sort, no doubt, but he is also

a spirit himself; and there are some amongst the ranks whose own spirit is about as active as those of their ancestors; others, too, who don't find it bad practice to work on both sides of the fence, and try which pays best; but such is life."

"If such is Spiritualism," I thought to myself, "the sooner I know it, the better." By this time the king of the Rowdy-ohs had got under full swing, and was roaring at the top of his medium's remarkably shrill voice a denunciation against the "wicked pale-faces," for killing his tribe, and threatening all sorts of retributive woes to every white squaw and papoose (*Anglicè*, every mother's son amongst the hated race), whom he, the said Contrepot king of the Rowdy-ohs, had come back to do for. Here the speaker, who was a very diminutive little man, but whom I was warned in a whisper to call "the big brave," was interrupted by a gentleman-like young man, who arose with a profound tremor in every limb, and who, shaking aloft his quivering hand, cried, "Peace, be still! Let the spirit of the tempest be at rest, and let the ears of my brothers drink in the words of wisdom." A general murmur ran round the room, proclaiming that this was White Eagle, and that "now we should hear something good."

For a few minutes the gentleman with the shakes proceeded in a very poetical but impressive strain to pour out descriptions of the "happy hunting-grounds," and the spirit of Christian humility and forgiveness which generally prevailed in those heavenly game-preserves; but unfortunately for the enjoyment which I had really begun to derive from the speaker's flights of fancy, the malignant Contrepot had brought in with him a band of Rowdy-ohs of the same belligerent character as himself, and before the amiable White Eagle had half finished his address, these fiery souls charged upon the various media

who were distributed in profusion through the apartment, and started all of them to their feet in characteristic attitudes of Indian warfare, and corresponding tones of Indian whoops and yells.

Before five minutes had elapsed, the uproar was tremendous.

Chiefs and braves were uttering war-whoops, dancing war-dances, flourishing hats, sticks, and umbrellas in lieu of tomahawks and hatchets. Some of the inspired leaped up to the ceiling with prodigious shouts; others squatted on their heels and smoked papers rolled up as "pipes of peace;" others trotted round the benches, single file, on imaginary "war paths;" and more than one fierce warrior made at the heads of the company nearest to them, with the avowed intention of taking their scalps. As to what was said, or what the particular object of the raid was, the king of the Rowdy-ols alone could tell. For my part, I could distinguish nothing but yells worthy of demons, broken by such words as wigwams, braves, squaws, papooses, chiefs, blankets, etc., portions of an Indian vocabulary with which every medium subject to Indian fits is, as I afterwards found, abundantly familiar.

Now and then I heard a voice hiss out, "Me am Mac-an-oise — big brave of the Wachen-ards;" supplemented by another voice, announcing itself as "Wat-che-call, chief of the I-see-ums;" and still another as "Bang-um-ups of the tribe of O-my-i;" but why these enunciations of personal identity were volunteered, where nobody cared or nobody listened, it would be difficult to say; enough that I left the powwow with my new friend in the thick of the fray, he laughing heartily, and I sorrowing silently, at what we had witnessed. This was not the last of our experiences that night. My courteous guide carried me to another public circle, where just as

we entered, a little girl, apparently not over twelve years of age, was writing rapidly on a slate, and a company of about thirty persons sat around eagerly and silently watching her; when the child had filled both sides of the slate, she rose and handed it to a lady who seemed to be a stranger to all present, and who received it with evident surprise. Whilst perusing this communication, the lady's fast falling tears gave evidence of the deep emotion it had excited. When she had read it through, she raised her glistening eyes to the company, saying, "It is a perfectly graphic communication from a sweet young daughter whom I have but recently had the misfortune to lose; and here, friends, is a complete *fac-simile* of her well remembered signature." Whilst I was still inspecting the writing watered by the poor mother's tears, I found myself accosted by the same little girl, who, standing before me with fixed eyes, and the most heavenly expression of countenance I ever beheld, murmured, "Father, you don't know Evangeline, but she knows you. Have you no word of greeting to give the spirit child you never knew as a mortal?"

"Evangeline! welcome!" I would have said more, but a choking in my throat prevented me.

"Father! Do you remember the long raven tresses of Juanita? They shadow your shoulder now, for she — Juanita — your ever loving, ever faithful wife, stands beside you."

"I cannot doubt it; what would she say to me?"

"Only to warn you that if you would find the kernel of immortality, you must seek patiently amongst the chaff of human folly. The darkest shadows are thrown by the densest of substances, and if you would gather the roses of eternal life, you must also take the thorns amidst which they are to be found."

"I accept; is this all?"

"No; she says, The immortal still loves, and now — she vanishes."

"Who is that wonderful child?" I inquired of Go-ahead, as she passed on, still entranced, to another member of the company, personating vividly the action of some well recognized deceased friend.

"O, Milly!" replied my conductor. "Milly is one of the best test mediums in New York. Everybody knows Milly Cole; but come, I doubt if she has anything more for you to-night, and we have still another visit to make."

The gathering to which we now wended our way was an association of practical Spiritualists as my informant declared. "None of your ranting Methodist revivalisms there; no palavers of Indian savageism, nor vague metaphysical dreamings, to be found in the Society of Progressive Spiritualists," to which he would now introduce me.

My expectations ran high; my aspirations began to ascend. In a few minutes we were at the place of meeting, where I found about fifty thoughtful, but rather odd-looking persons were assembled, male and female. It struck me that their manners were quite free; none of the conventionalisms which usually raise up barriers of reserve between the sexes affecting these practical reformers, or preventing that interchange of fraternal feeling which Paul recommends at the close of some of his epistles, for a further description of which, consult First Corinthians xvi. 20.

When we entered, a man was speaking who at once arrested my attention, and gave me a vivid idea of a practical Spiritualist. He was tall, thin, not ungraceful, or destitute of those indescribable attributes which to the initiated characterize the ill-understood word, gentleman. His features were finely cut, and his voice clear and

pleasant; but the thing that struck me most in his address was the peculiarly sophistical method of argument he adopted, leaving upon my mind the impression that in morals and ethics he was radically wrong and monstrously impure, but in philosophy he was right, and in argument and logic unanswerable.

Somehow, the thoughts of my lost Evangeline and my angel Juanita, conjured up into memory by the weird child I had just seen, recurred to me every moment during that man's speech, with the sentiment of strange joy that they were safe in heaven, and never could be subject to the snares and sophistries of a wicked world. I could not tell how or why this man awakened such thoughts; I could not tell why I felt jealous and anxious for every female friend I had ever known, as I listened to him. I could take no exception to his smooth sentences, well rounded periods, and subtle logic; but when he had finished, I felt in my spirit a protest going up against him to the God that was something more to me than "a principle," and the angels whose heavenly love I had not yet learned to associate with the ideas of worldly lust.

When Mr. Blackstone (the speaker in question) sat down; to my intense gratification my friend Go-ahead rose up, and after the cheering with which he was received had subsided, he proceeded to elaborate upon the speaker's theme, which somehow or other I could not define, although it seemed to me to tend towards the proposition to establish a community in the article of wives.

Mr. Go-ahead's ideas were far more clearly defined, although they lacked Mr. Blackstone's terribly sophistical polish. He contended for a community of human rights in everything, including houses, lands, property, trade, commerce, voting, office-holding, etc. In view of "the

situation," all men of property and capitalists were public robbers and swindlers, and should be made to disgorge their ill-gotten wealth for the benefit of the race, but especially for that part of it which had not a penny of its own. All men at present in office should be summarily turned out, and those that were then out should be as summarily turned in. (Go-ahead held no office at that time himself.) Every private residence should be turned into a coöperative home, every private family into a portion of a community; every store, and, indeed, every individual enterprise, should be quenched, and vast coöperative associations, founded upon perfect principles of justice, take their places.

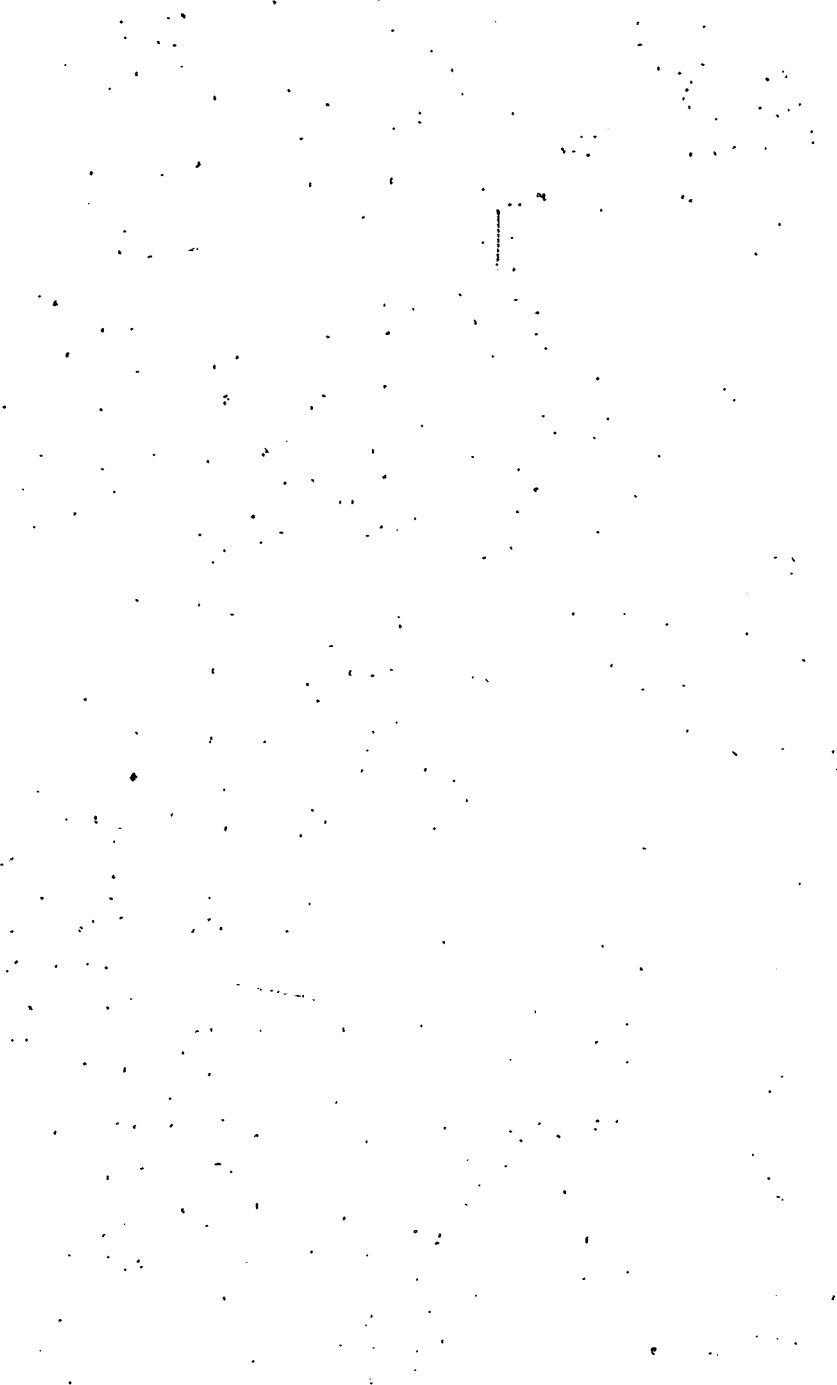
Government should be upset, and the governed should take their places as governors. Well dressed thieves should go out of office, and ill dressed ditto should go in. The pampered children of fortune should go down, and the starving children of poverty should go up.

Rags, henceforth, should be a passport to place and power, instead of silk and broadcloth, and no man or woman should be permitted to hold office that could claim the possession of more than a three-cent piece, or the shelter of a roof that did not let the water in. At the end of this brilliant flight of oratory, several enthusiasts in the audience cried, "Amen!" one or two others adding, "A-woman!" and all, men and women alike, clapped their hands, stamped their feet, and cried, "Good for you, Go-ahead! you are the man that's going to save the nation." As several excited reformers were now on their feet, and the mirth seemed likely to "wax fast and furious," Mr. Blackstone, in his smooth, persuasive voice, piercing into the very heart of the clamor, suggested that as the hour was late, and the benighted fossil who owned that hall had some antique notions about the next day's being called, in the dark ages of superstition, the

Sabbath, or the Lord's, or some such mythical title (great applause and much satirical laughter), it might be best to adjourn. Before doing so, however, he proposed that a few resolutions, embodying the opinions of the two last speakers, should be passed, in order that their position should be clearly defined before the whole human family, and that the adherents to those relics of barbarism, called rights of property, land ownership, marriage, or any exclusive rights except the common rights of all, to the common ownership of everything, should hear the report thereof, and shake in their monopolizing shoes!

Fresh bursts of applause, fresh shouts of "Amen," and "A-woman," and the resolutions passed, and the meeting adjourned. My highly popular companion was then congratulated, applauded, squeezed, and caressed, and finally we were both liberated into the empty streets, where we shook hands and parted, after agreeing to meet the next day, to hear the speaking at Dodworth's Hall, in which I was assured I should find another, though far less practical phase of Spiritualism.

At exactly twelve o'clock that night, I ascended the steps of my hotel, whilst the irreverent thought found its way from my brain to my lips, "Amongst the spirits, with a vengeance."



THE GARLAND.

SUMMARY OF A MONTH'S EXPERIENCES IN SPIRIT COMMUNION.

BY OSIRIS.

THE past month has not been rife with novelty, although the abundance of marvelous phenomena seems to be on the increase, and the march of the Spiritual army has been, for the most part, steadfast and onward.

The painful exceptions to this progressive action, and perhaps the news item which ought most forcibly to engage the attention of Spiritualists, is the fact that we have to blot out from our list of periodicals organized to instruct and entertain the minds of several millions of believers, the *American Spiritualist* and *Lyceum Banner*. Both these journals were undertaken with a view of ministering to the demands of those whose faith, above all other persons', should teach them the duty, as well as the eternal value, of doing unto others as they would be done unto. A. A. Wheelock and Mrs. L. Kimball put this Golden Rule into practical application when they devoted time, talents, self-sacrifice, and all the bitter toil and ill-requited effort which editorial duties impose, in favor of the several millions for whom they prepared their useful publications. So few were the hundreds, or perhaps the scores, that responded to them, and practiced the Golden Rule in their favor; that they have fallen in their tracks; their papers are, as they themselves state, "temporarily suspended;" and if the voice of justice and reason could prevail with them, they would never be renewed again until Spiritualism could number as many Spiritualists in its ranks, as it can believers in its phenomenal marvels.

For the apotheosis on these now, alas! silent voices from the spirit land, read the "Epilogue" to the leading article of this number, and the truthful as well as scathing remarks of the *Banner of Light* in the July 27th and August 17th numbers. Faithfully, and all too truly, does the editor state the case in the following pithy paragraph:—

"We desire at this juncture to ask of the Spiritualists of the United States: Are you prepared to see your representative papers sink, one after another, in the great sea of pecuniary trouble? Is there no sense of responsibility in the case? While the printed advocates of antiquated systems of thought find cheerful supporters, and ever and anon individuals who bequeath to them at death sums sufficient to materially help them in the reduction of their price, the new and living gospel of to-day is brought before the world of believers and skeptics only by the hard, unyielding efforts of iron willed reformers, who are ready—as brother Wheelock has been—to sacrifice position, pecuniary or social, health, enjoyment, in fact, all 'the friendships and comforts of life,' to keep in circulation the various journals with which they are connected."

The *Religio-Philosophical Journal* gives several interesting descriptions of the circles held in Chicago, for physical manifestations. The best written, most candid, and intelligent of these reports, are from the pen of Mrs. Annie Lord Chamberlain, herself one of the most gifted and highly endowed physical mediums in the world, and one whose generous recognition of the merits of others speaks more loudly for the nobility of soul which inspires her pen than all the laudations which could be pronounced upon her. Some of Mrs. Chamberlain's facts are in advance even of the experiences of those most familiar with the power of the invisible over the visible world; for example, she reports that the spirits who keep watch and ward over the wonderful Bangs family, have ministered to the good mother in the article of cookery, laying her cloth, preparing her meals when indisposed, and then serving up the various condiments, cooked in the most approved fashion.

No doubt such statements as these, like our recently published history of Bill Dole, the talking spirit of Logansport, together with others to come, of a kindred nature, startle even the well-trained Spiritualist; whilst the all-believing Christian, who pins his soul's salvation on the fact that an angel baked cakes on the rock for Naaman, some two thousand years ago, would doubtless rejoice to put the narrators in the penitentiary, for promulgating "awful and impossible fabrications." No matter who believes or who denies. The facts wait for no man's endorsement. They are with us, and driving skepticism from all its mouldy fastnesses, are compelling us to assume the attitude of patient watchers on the progress of an army whose numbers are countless; whose methods are all unknown; and whose powers loom up with more and more potentiality with each moment's observation.

One of the most significant and interesting reports of Chicago Spiritualism published in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* since our last review, gives a detailed account of a séance with Mrs. Maud Lord, during which the reporter of the *Chicago Tribune* and three other members of the editorial staff, a Baptist minister, and some other notables of the city, were present. Besides the display of starry lights, the sound of voices, calling of names, varieties of physical force, demonstrations of extraordinary power, spirit music, and all the usual concomitants of a dark circle, several of the witnesses (including the *Tribune* reporter, who testifies of the fact in the *Tribune*) were favored by the clasp of spirit hands which came and melted, formed again and again melted out in the grasp of the narrators, giving tests of spiritual agency, which put all the theories of stuffed gloves or mediumistic trickery, out of the pale of human possibility. Manifesta-

tions of a similar kind to those noticed above are, indeed, increasing upon us on every side. It is scarcely possible, and still less necessary, to note how numerous and forcible are the proofs which crowd the columns of the Spiritual papers, and press upon the attention of the observer throughout the American continent. Like the miracles witnessed by St. Augustine, "they are so common that they are hardly worth recording."

Now and then a *rara avis* appears, distinguished for some phase more remarkable than the rest, and that is all. Such an one has been several times reported of, in the Spiritual journals, in the person of Mr. Harry Bastian, of whose recent visit to northern New York Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten speaks in enthusiastic terms of praise.

Whilst a few of the visitors to Mr. Bastian's circles considered that the faces presented at the opening of the curtain were stolid, immobile, and resembled nothing more than masks, by far the greater number, especially at Watertown, N. Y., declared that hands moved and beckoned the visitors present, lips smiled, heads were nodded, and radiant, life-like portraitures of friends were given in great numbers. One young lady beheld the likeness of a beautiful nun, whom she at once recognized as one of her much loved teachers, from a convent in Montreal.

The lovely apparition not only bore the most striking tokens of identity, but actually beckoned the young lady to approach, and signed upon her head and face the familiar benediction which she had been accustomed to receive at the hands of her mortal friend.

Mrs. Britten reports favorably of the Spiritualistic movement in Ogdensburgh, Potsdam, and Watertown, N. Y., where a trio of enterprising gentlemen have combined

to procure the services of mediums and lecturers, and secure to the poor, toiling wayfarers they invite, the charm of hospitable entertainment, pleasant homes, excellent audiences, and honorable remuneration.

That the bread of life thus distributed is broken at the expense of the very few, and that through much disinterested self-sacrifice and individual labor, is so much the more heavenly recompense laid up to the credit of the gallant workers, and so much the more stern responsibility evaded by the niggards who grudge to pay ten cents to hear tidings from the spirit world concerning their soul's destiny, and yet disgorge their hundred dollars at a time, to sustain ecclesiastical peddlers who vend passports to a heaven about which they know nothing, and deal out convictions to a hell too flimsily arrayed in theological trumpery to scare two-year-old babes withal. Mrs. Blair, the charming and highly gifted spirit artist, and E. V. Wilson, the renowned Spiritual iconoclast, whose death blows at the images of materialism and superstition are dealt with the sledge-hammer of test facts, have been visiting northern New York, and preparing the way for the lectures of Mrs. Laura Cuppy Smith, Dr. J. K. Bailey, and Emma Hardinge Britten. For the results, consult the parable of "the sower and the seed."

During Mrs. Britten's visit to Watertown, one Kinney, an ecclesiastical peddler of the class described above, undertook to "explode the whole thing," and "solve the whole problem" by a set of dreary diatribes against Spiritualism, delivered to the people who had paid him to tell God's truth, and direct them on the road to the very spiritual existence he was deriding and insulting. The *Banner of Light* of August 31 contains a full report of the splendid irony, wherewith the *Watertown Despatch* reviews the reverend (?) gentleman's positions, and then puffs them away into the empty nothingness from which they were derived.

N. B. — Spiritualism still lives and thrives in Watertown, Kinney notwithstanding.

Two valuable additions to the literature of Spiritualism have been recently issued by the American press. The first of these is a compilation from the bold, clear, and fearless writings of Mr. Thomas Hazard of Rhode Island, whose admirable articles on "Mediums," "The Manifestations at Moravia," "Who are the Blasphemers?" "The Ordeal of Life," etc., have been arranged in pamphlet form by Messrs. White & Co., and are now offered for sale at the *Banner of Light* office. The name of the noble author is justly dear to every true Spiritualist, and the arrangement of his valuable contributions in the compendious form presented by William White & Co., ought to be esteemed as a boon to the friends of progress.

The other literary gem is one whose lustre will be at once understood, when we announce it as the work of William Denton. It is a volume of poems entitled "Radical Rhymes," and it contains all the high-soaring inspiration, tender humanity, and fearless defense of the right, which distinguish this admirable lecturer's rostrum addresses, combined with a tone of delicate poetic grace, which would hardly have been expected from so terse and synthetic a prose writer.

For some time past the minds of those who array themselves into the attitude of partisanship, for and against organization, have been exercised on the subject of certain articles emanating from the pen of Professor Brittan, entitled "Definite Proposals."

If we have hitherto foreborne to comment on the subject of these articles, it is because they were necessarily immersed, on their first appearance, in that same bitter sphere of criticism which it has been the pledge, and will be the purpose, of this publication steadily to ignore.

The wail of the licentious against any attempt, however vague, to organize is uttered. The plea of hopelessness on the other side has been entered, and it now becomes the part of calm reason to inquire how far propositions enunciated by so capable a thinker as Professor Brittan, should meet with respectful consideration and due regard.

The demand for organic action is resounding throughout the ranks of Spiritualism from Europe to America, — from Australia to California, and not the most lawless minds that pass gaseous resolutions at frothy conventions denunciatory of any restraints on their own sovereign wills, can much longer retard the cry for obedience to Nature's first law, Order. The questions in brief, then, that arise on a due consideration of Professor Brittan's propositions are, first: Why have every one of those propositions been tried before and failed? What fresh prospects of success does the Spiritual horizon now present for their inauguration? and, Could they be most expediently carried out by individual effort, or through associative action? To answer these questions, we might appeal significantly enough to Professor Brittan himself. He is every inch a man; a Spiritualist to the very core; he possesses one of the kindest hearts and clearest minds in our ranks, and none more than himself has enjoyed that full experience of Spiritualism and Spiritualists, by which a projector should grow wise.

Supposing we were to ask him why so many editors have collapsed; so many institutions and associative efforts failed; so many of our best speakers and mediums fallen by the wayside, passed over into their rest, or retreated from the field; so many uncounted efforts subsided into forgetfulness, and he himself, one of the most learned and capable men in our ranks, left without any sphere of action worthy of his great talents and capabili-

ties? We *know* the answer all too well, but would like to receive it from the Professor's lips; meantime, to carry out his plan on a new and broadly associative basis, the Professor must be aware that the joint stock company he requires would be nothing more nor less than a representation of so much capital, and that to a very large amount. Does he expect that the people who grudge an entrance fee of ten cents, to hear a first-class lecture, are going to pay one hundred dollars a year for the same purpose? That those that pay their five hundred dollars a year to support preachers of doctrines they don't believe in, and all for the sake of popularity or the neighbors' opinion, are going to forego their idols and bestow their means on the doctrine they do believe in, because the Professor asks them to?

Our friend, in his own full manhood, overlooks the fact that our lecturers, mediums, editors, and writers are languishing, nay, almost perishing for want of a few dimes, and that from the very people who he expects will contribute many thousands of dollars.

If Professor Brittan will wait until the Spiritualists will forego, for one or two years, their camp-meetings, grove-meetings, picnics, conventions, and other expensive associations for the dissemination of gaseous resolutions, dancing, "good times" generally, and support their toiling workers with even common fairness, he may hope to see them do still more, and support, in time, even some great central organization for practicalizing the glorious possibilities of Spiritualism. Our space forbids any more extended notice of Professor Brittan's plans, or all the reasons why they are, in this generation at least, simply Utopian, however beautiful and necessary. All that we can say by way of summary is, that the demand of Spiritualism before all others is SPIRITUALISTS, and until we have a few more of these rare but much needed personages,

Professor Brittan's plans, like Wagner's music, must be of "the future."

During the past season no ordinary reporter could keep track of the various conventions; grove, camp, picnic, and other expensive associative gatherings that have been held throughout the length and breadth of the land; and yet two of our bravest and most faithful journalists have sunk beneath the depths, without a hand stretched forth to uplift them, whilst the few that remain can only maintain themselves by an amount of sacrifice, struggle, and individual toil, which we may boldly challenge any other set of special thinkers in the world to equal. In the mean time, we have not one single hospital for our sick; one single national or well sustained healing institute; one single association for the scientific and continuous investigation of our wonderful facts and occult experiences; one single public library, museum, or national institute, where our books, pictures, journals, etc., can be collected; nor one single coöperative association where anything is done or said which is not promoted by private enterprise, and an amount of individual responsibility which is perpetually threatening to swamp its promoters. If we could only get up *but one* enterprise, in but one of these directions, and that by one at a time, we might hope that Professor Brittan's eloquently pleaded propositions would ultimately take shape and form.

As it is, we hail every honest protest against the wastefulness of time, means, and effort, with which the true uses of Spiritualism are being frittered off into gas, or trampled into the mire of "free love." For the present, we earnestly, solemnly crave for better support to the journalistic, literary, religious, and phenomenal missions, that are already in operation; and as a beginning for the good time coming for which we watch and wait, let us commend to every thoughtful Spiritualist the perusal of

a pamphlet sent to our office for review, and for sale at Messrs. William White & Co.'s, we believe. It is entitled, "Common Sense View of Spiritualism," and consists of an address delivered to the Colorado Association of Spiritualists at Golden, July 7th, 1872, by D. D. Belden, Esq., of Denver.

Our space only allows us to print the following extract, although we would gladly transcribe the entire of Mr. Belden's practical and eloquent utterances.

Speaking of the absolute necessity for organization, he says : —

In every other religious society, the general or central organization grows out of, and exists as an incident to the local organizations. For instance, the Methodists have their local churches, and as an incident for the transaction of business growing out of the local churches, they have their General Conference. The same is true of the Presbyterians, the Baptists, and all other religious denominations. So in civil government; we had the Colonies or States, and the Federal Union sprung into existence as a necessity, when its functions could no longer be dispensed with. And in all nature, nothing seems to have been begotten until there was a necessity for its existence : and everything which exists seems to be related to something, if not to *all* things else, save only this so-called National Spiritual Convention, which elected Mrs. Woodhull, at Troy. That seems to be related to nothing. It has neither parentage nor legitimate issue.

But everything has to have its day of fanaticism, and I admit that up to this time there has been a necessity for much of this confusion, for the reason, as I have said, that "the wise and prudent" cannot receive new truths.

May we not profit by this example? Or to speak it more plainly, does not the necessity exist, and is there not demanded to-day, for Spiritualism, "a new departure"? I think so. I believe the time has arrived when everything foreign to Spiritualism, when all these isms and much of this folly, and most of these excrescences, should be separated from Spiritualism. The weary pilgrim should be permitted to lay down his load, and we should adopt creeds, if you choose to call them by that name. While the churches have learned much from us — though they do not seem to know it — we are not too wise to learn something from the churches. We want something *more* than the constitution of a mere

lecture committee, because, though religion is based upon law, it is yet something more than a mere science. We want a declaration of some cardinal principles and ideas, around which we can rally, and which will represent us to the world, so that when we are asked what we believe, or what our objects are, we can point to something for a ready answer; indeed, something which the world may read at their pleasure. I would not adopt anything as a finality or as embracing all of truth; for I know no creed, no book, nor *all* books, can contain all truth. But I believe we may safely gather from those parts of the universe nearest to us some little fragments of truth. We may at least say we believe in love and charity, in virtue and integrity, in immortal life and spirit communion.

After we have organized these strong local associations, receiving into membership no man or woman who will not at least *promise* to live a life of purity and honesty, then, if for any purpose these societies desire to unite their efforts, they may send duly elected delegates to a general convention, with full authority to act for and bind their constituents; and when this takes place, we shall have no fears that the action of our National Conventions will bring reproach upon us, or our cause.

Promising to weave our next monthly garland from the exotic blossoms of Old World Spiritualism, we take leave of our readers with Mr. Belden's extracts, to every syllable of which we cordially say, AMEN.



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