

CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALIST

"EVERY PLANT WHICH MY HEAVENLY FATHER HATH NOT PLANTED SHALL BE ROOTED UP."

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SPIRITUALISM IN CALIFORNIA.
THE EVENTFUL NIGHTS OF AUGUST 20 AND 21.

BY F. C. EWING.

I am about to undertake a task,—here in the silence of this room,—to which I feel impelled by a combination of circumstances, such as I believe never surrounded man before. I am hurried to its accomplishment,—to the unburdening of my mind, from certain strange intelligence, not only on account of an express order, which I have received,—the nature and particulars of which will more fully appear below,—but because I feel that I can only relieve my mind from its insupportable weight by laying before the public the occurrences of the last two nights.

I am in a house on McAllister Street, between Hyde and Larkin. The room in which I am seated contains little furniture, save a poor bed, a large pine table, one of smaller dimensions, and a chair. The paper I write on,—this is the second night I have been here,—I was compelled to bring with me, together with the pen, ink, and candle. At every whisper of the breeze, as it sighs among the bushes outside, I shudder and look around me, where lies the body of a man whom I knew not until yesterday—yet to whom I feel bound by a spell such as I never experienced before. The hush of silent death is in this room; and I can distinctly hear my own breathing and that of a little child—she tells me her name is Jane—who is sitting on a box at the foot of the bed, and who, although young, is just old enough to realize that she is stricken by an awful calamity, and yet knows not whether the more to be amazed or grieved. At times she will come to my side, and the tears will rise into her eyes; but at a word from me, she will check them, return to the dead body of her parent, and there gaze into the cold, still face, silently and with a mingled expression of awe and uncertainty. She, too, has been a witness of the events of the past forty-eight hours, and now that she is at last left alone, she clings to me instinctively for protection—she knows not from what nor why. May God give me health and strength to support her and guide her in the uncertain ways of the dark future!

She has just stolen quietly to me, put her little arms about my neck and said—
"What are you writing, sir? Come with me. I am very lonely. Come with me to father and make him talk."

I kissed her upon that white forehead, and said—
"Hush, child! Father will not speak to us any more to-night. You shall go with me to-morrow, and we'll take father with us."

I led her back to her seat, and turned quickly,—for the tears were gushing to my eyes. But I must hasten to my recital.

I shall endeavor to state the plain facts, as they occurred, as briefly and in as simple a style as possible. For I find that it is already half past two in the morning, and I feel quite exhausted from the excitement I have passed through. I am aware that I shall subject myself to the taunts of the street, and be pointed at by the world as one of the "insane dupes of the Spiritual rappers," in laying before the public that which I am about to—and nothing but an important sense of duty, (mistaken, it may be thought by some) urges me to submit myself to such an ordeal.

I will not (at least upon this occasion) go into the rationale of "Spiritualism." The public are already sufficiently acquainted with the modes in which the "manifestations" are given, to understand thoroughly all I shall have to say. I will not speak of the singular facts of "Odism," which have been established by Reichenbach and Liebig, with a clearness only less satisfactory than that with which the truths of electricity are proven. I will not state that no evidence of the Odic fluid can be discovered in paralyzed limbs; I will not speak of the supposition, therefore, of the above named physicists, that as mind cannot act directly on matter, and as it is impossible by an effort of mind to move a paralyzed limb, the Odic fluid may be the condition necessary to lie between the mind and the arm or foot (which are matter) to account for the mysterious effect of the will in moving our bodies. The relation of these facts and suppositions is not at all necessary to the clear understanding of my story.

Night before last, (the nineteenth of August) after I had retired and extinguished my candle, I was surprised on laying my head upon my pillow, at discovering a pale, bluish brush of light at the other side of the room, apparently hovering over a portion of a tea-poy, on which is a Parian statuette of Venus, one or two daguerotypes, a small pearl cross and several other little matters of ornament. I was struck by the suddenness with which the light ceased to waver as I directed my attention to it. I started up, but immediately came to the conclusion that the strange appearance resulted from a diseased retina. (My eyes have been affected for the past six months.) I looked away, supposing, of course, that if the apparition could be traced to the cause mentioned, it would display itself wherever I gazed. This, however, I found not to be the

case. And as I looked again towards the tea-poy, I thought I heard a series of faint tickings. Determined to have my curiosity satisfied, I now arose and advanced towards the apparition. I relighted the candle; there was, however, no unusual appearance about the stand. But I soon found that the sounds proceeded from a small pocket-compass that was lying thereon. I opened it, and the needle was trembling and vibrating quite violently over N. Soon the north pole moved round to the south-west, and back again, and so on, three distinct times—each time pausing a moment at N., trembling violently, then sweeping round and reaching the S. W. point with a jerk. Thinking this a very singular circumstance, I hurriedly threw on some clothes, and sat down to watch it. After a pause, and while my eyes were directed intently upon the needle, it moved slowly round again, reaching the south-west point with a jerk,—repeating this three times, and then stopping. It seemed to me to act almost with intelligence; and I involuntarily uttered,—"What does this mean?" To my surprise, for I was a firm disbeliever in anything like "Spiritualism"—the needle, as though in answer to my ejaculation, made a rapid circuit entirely round the card, passed the north point, and resting for an instant at south-west, or rather over the fifty-first degree point, returned slowly and steadily to its place north.

I now, (half ashamed of myself) commenced a series of questions in whisper. Yet, although the needle seemed to act intelligently, I could not discover what was the nature of the intelligence (if any) intended to be conveyed, and why, after each series of unsuccessful questions and answers, it swept with more and more vigor to south, fifty-one degrees west. And at length I reluctantly retired.

Last evening, about ten o'clock, I received a note, written in pencil, which I was told, had been left for me by a little girl. It was brief, and was exceedingly urgent in a request—namely, it was almost a command, that I should go out to the house of the writer—Mr. John F. Lane. It stated that I need fear nothing, but should start immediately upon its reception, bringing with me paper, a pen and candles.

I learned that the little girl could not read, but by showing the superscription of the note containing only my name, had at last succeeded in finding the *locus* of my apartment on Kearney Street. But she had gone and I could therefore learn nothing of the nature of the riddle from her.

I cannot tell how, but by some strange intuition, I associated unconsciously the note, with its singular request, its lack of any one by which I could discover why my presence was required in a desolate and lonely part of the city at the dead hour of night, with the singular occurrence of the compass the night before. The only bond of connection between them, it is true, was the unexplained mystery that hung around each. But the human mind often finds itself at conclusions without any known steps by which it could have arrived at them, whose subsequently ascertained correctness staggers reason, and leads to the belief that there are mental processes and strange sympathies and connections in nature whose character and depths are to be sought for in the Infinite God alone. At length, however, I became convinced that some villain was working upon my curiosity, to entrap me among the sand-hills and rob me; and I determined not to go, and to pay no heed to the affair at all. But I could not drive the subject from my mind, and at last I deliberately resolved, come what would, to go out to the spot designated and solve the mystery. For precaution's sake, I relieved myself of my watch and purse, put my pistol in my pocket and procured a lantern before sallying forth.

At the corner of Kearny and Sacramento Streets, I met two of my friends—Mr. H. and Doctor L.—Mr. H. asked me where I was going in that Biogenes style. In response, I related the circumstance of the note, and my determination to see the end of the affair. The two expressed their willingness to accompany me, and we proceeded together. It was now half past eleven o'clock. We passed without molestation out to the corner of Sutter and Mason Sts., and thence struck off in a diagonal direction over the sand-hills toward Yerba Buena Cemetery. Contrary to our expectations, our devoted walk to McAllister Street was undisturbed, save by the occasional barking of a dog. When we reached the corner of what we found on inquiry at a neighboring house to be Hyde and McAllister Streets, one of my friends called my attention to a noise that sounded like a faint groan. We approached in the direction whence it came, and found ourselves nearing a small house that stands on the north side of the road, just before you come to Larkin Street. This was the house designated in the note. I rapped at the door, and the little girl who answered the call immediately said,—
"Father wants you to come in."

Mr. Lane, who was lying upon the bed, reached forth his hand in welcome: but was evidently surprised on seeing Mr. H. and the Doctor following me into the room. After apologizing for not having chairs enough for us, he called me to the bedside and stated that he knew I must have been surprised at receiving his note; that he was too weak to write more; that he had told Jane to see me in person, but that she, becoming alarmed at her long absence from him and at the lateness of the hour, had hastened back without obeying his instruction. He said that it was very kind of me to take so much trouble, but that he was a dying man, and had information of importance to make me acquainted with.

"But, my dear sir," said I, "something must be done for you. Fortunately one of my friends is a physician,"—and I called Doctor L. to the bedside.

Mr. Lane was evidently in the very last stages of consumption. In fact the Doctor told me in a whisper, that it was too late; that nothing could be done, and that his end was near.

He overheard us and said that he knew all; that nothing remained for him but to fulfil a duty to me and to the world. Before proceeding to the business before us, he told me briefly, his previous circumstances,—his early education, which was liberal,—his poverty, and the fact that his little child—this patient, sweet little Jane, who, exhausted with watching, has laid her head in my lap and sunk, at last, into a slumber, would by his death be left alone in the world. He besought me with tears in his eyes to watch over her when he was gone, and see that she did not suffer. He did not care about her being poor. He expected she would have to work. He did not wish her to be a burden to me. But oh! he prayed that I would guide her footsteps away from sin and its influence; that I would guide into her a love of purity, and so guard her, that she would grow to womanhood, an honor to herself and a blessing to those around her. I drew little Jane to me, kissed her, and satisfied the dying man by promising solemnly that I would do my utmost to comply with his last wish.

His mind was then apparently relieved from its only care and he turned his attention to the business before us.

"My friends," said he, "I must premise my remarks by stating that I am a firm believer in the Great Doctrine of the present century; that we have at last reached that momentous period, when the Spirits of the departed can, through the medium of a principle newly discovered, communicate their thoughts and wishes to mortals upon earth. I have been led to this belief by the surest of all processes—personal experience. When I am alone and find a table moving under my own preservative hands—moving intelligently—moving in such a manner as to give me information of events which are happening in the distant East—and which I subsequently find to have occurred exactly as stated through this mysterious agency—may more, when I feel a nameless sensation—half chill, half tremor—running through my whole body, apparently penetrating to the innermost recesses of my brain, and find my arm and hand moved over the paper beneath it by some influence which I cannot convince myself is not foreign,—when I find my hand writing strange, grand thoughts, such as I never conceived of before—such as at times it takes me days thoroughly to understand,—when I close my eyes and so direct myself of attention, that I know nothing, except that my hand is moving, and when I find afterwards thoughts worthy of the angels penned, I cannot but believe we are upon the threshold of one of the most eventful changes that ever occurred upon the surface of the earth. Geology has told us of mighty epochs in the far past history of the world. Look back, my friends. Remember that whole races of the animal and vegetable kingdom have been swept away,—that whole periods of the world have moved into the still past, leaving their history legible to the mind of a subsequent period on the everlasting rocks and strata. Remember that whole continents have gone grandly down and been swallowed up in the depths of ocean; that whole oceans have swayed in volumes around the earth—from pole to pole, from the Orient to the Occident. If we stand amazed, as we contemplate the mighty changes that rest entombed in the past, ever receding from us, it is unreasonable to suppose that other changes equally momentous are approaching the world from the future? O, deceive yourselves not; for mankind tread tottering upon the verge of a tremendous epoch; that in which Finity can speak to Infinity,—that in which the Greatest Seal shall be broken, and the secrets of hereafter whispered from strange intelligence to man! I know it—I know—know—"

Mr. Lane here sunk back upon his pillow, exhausted.

I had stood rapt in wonder and admiration, as I listened to such sentences coming from a man apparently so humble in life. The shadow of death stretching up to meet him seemed almost to inspire him. The deliberate enunciation with which the remarks were uttered, coupled with the soul-felt earnestness with which he spoke, impressed us all; and for a moment we stood at the bedside, gazing in rapt attention at that pale face with its Spiritual expression and its closed eyes. The eyelids seemed to me so thin, as to be powerless to conceal the large jet black eyes within, which almost appeared to be displayed through them.

I know not how long our silence would have lasted, had not the Doctor called my attention to the fact, that the last struggle of mind had hastened the dying man towards his dissolution; and that if he had any important information to communicate, we must be brief.

I looked again, and the large, black eyes were upon us—they seemed larger and blacker than any I had ever beheld before—and Mr. Lane continued, "I wish this conversation recorded. At first, I regretted that you had brought your friends with you; but I am glad that you have done so, as one of them can be of service to us."

I then took the writing materials which I had brought and after recording, as nearly as I could recollect, the remark set down above, I delivered them to Mr. H., who moved the large table into the center of the room, and proceeded to take the notes which now lie before me, without whose valuable assistance I should have great difficulty in preparing these remarks for the press.

Mr. Lane resumed—
"As I have told you, I am not only a believer in Spiritualism, but am a medium myself. Four days

ago, I was informed by one of the Spirits, that he desired me to procure some gentlemen either connected with the press, or to whom the columns of a paper were open, to be with me during my last moments: that what should occur at our interview, would be of importance. I knew none of the editors. I had heard, however, that you had devoted several months to the investigation of Spiritualism, and that you were previously, atheistically inclined. The fact that an atheist should have looked into this matter with any degree of assiduity convinced me that you were a candid man, open to conviction. Was I rightly informed with regard to your previous tenets, and your investigations?"

I answered in the affirmative.

"I am surprised, then, that you have not exercised your advantages, by publishing some of the extraordinary proofs of the science. I suppose you have recovered from your atheism, and that you are somewhat of a believer in Spiritualism?"

I responded that, with regard to the former, I was still quite skeptical, and inclined to a belief in materialism: and as for the latter, that my earnest investigations had only led me to the conclusion that it was unmitigated humbug so far as *Spiritualism* was concerned.

Mr. Lane appeared astonished, and after a pause, asked me if I had any objection to remaining with him, and awaiting the result. I told him that I certainly had none.

At his request the small table was now drawn quite near the head of the bed. Mr. Lane, who was lying upon his back, stretched forth his thin, white hand and placed it, with the palm downwards, upon the side nearest to him, then closed his eyes as though he were settling himself for death. I sat at the end towards the foot of the bed, and was in such a position that I could see his face distinctly. The Doctor and Jane were at the opposite side of the bed, and Mr. H. seated at the table in the centre of the room. After a pause the table tilted toward me, lifting Mr. Lane's hand. We all remained in silence during which the dying man appeared to be putting mental questions; to which the table answered. At length he stated that the Spirit desired to transmit a written communication. Paper and a pencil were procured. The sick man's hand was moved very gently, but the paper moved with it. I then secured the sheet with my hand, and the first communication was as follows, viz:

"The time is ripe. The great truth has entered into the circle of the world silently, and powerfully,—as the 'still small voice.' There is sublimity in its silence. And thus it appeals to man. We cannot trumpet forth the truth. For voice is not to us, as hearing is to you. We appeal to you through sublimity, and silence, and an unheard, though felt power. Behold, how the great change has manifested itself in every city, and town, and hamlet in America? This is one of the great voices of your great country. She announces the glad tidings, crying 'the gates of Death are open,' the ladder of Jacob is reared, and angels' voices are ascending—descending—from us to them—from them to us." We are hovering above and around and among your republic of thought. It was the fitting field. Had the seed dropped too early, or upon the unenlightened, it would not have fructified. Years were to roll. Years have rolled. The intellectual soil was at last prepared, and the sowers joyfully went forth. At first the great change broke slowly upon man. It was right. There must have been doubters. But the Truth is mighty and prevails. The Spiritualists are numbered by hundreds of thousands. And thus it is, that the seed has taken root sufficiently for permanence and ever-growing, spite of all calamity of skepticism and ridicule; it is right that you should advance one step further. Attend. The meaning of Death is the mission of this interview. Then mayest thou indeed exclaim, 'Where is thy sting, and O Grave, where is thy victory!' Attend, while the passing Spirit performs his privilege and his high duty."

Mr. Lane's hand then ceased moving. The whole was calculated to render us breathless. After a pause I remarked, that the solemnity of this time would not, I freely confessed, permit me to doubt the honesty of the dying man. But I ventured to ask the Spirit, if Spirit it was, whether he would not give us some certain proof of the genuineness of the communication as a *Spiritual message*.

Mr. Lane's hand immediately traced the following—

"Willingly. The whole shall be in itself a test. For true it is, that one of the first elements of success in this new movement is, that you believe.—*Mr. Lane shall hold a conversation with you prior to, during and after death.* In which he will give you his experience of Death, and the facts and scenes, so to speak, to which he first awakes, after the heart has ceased to beat. Farewell."

I willingly dispelled doubt from my mind, and was for a time lost in thought at the solemn import of the Spirit's message. The silence was only broken by the low sobbing of this dear little creature, exhausted, and pale, and scantily clad, who, thank Heaven, has forgotten her affliction for a time in sweet slumber. Her dreamy eyes have seized upon my heart. Ah! what a shadow within them lies! Will she live to womanhood? O! will she always love and trust me, with all my faults? Well a day! At length as I gazed into the emaciated face upon the pillow before me, the lids lifted,—the large black eyes turned upon me, and with a faint voice he said—

"I am sinking—sinking."
His eyes then turned upon Jane with a gaze of sadness, then rolled slowly round to me again.—The look was enough. I leaned toward him, and assured him with a low voice that thenceforth she

should be my daughter. The little thing ran round to me and fell upon my breast sobbing violently.

"And now," said he frintly, and with pauses between his sentences, "I am ready to die. I feel that it is good—it grows dim—dim—dim. I am losing earth—losing you all. I know that I live. It is a solitary passage, but what I know not. Are you here? Touch me, touch me—that I may know that I live."

I pressed my hand gently upon his as it lay upon the table before me. It was cold.

"Are you—are you here? Can you not touch me?"

I stooped over him and whispered into his ear that his hand was in mine.

"In mine? In mine? There is no angel here. What was it whispered? I am in no one's keeping. I am passing—O," said he, making a faint effort to rise, "O! that I could stay!—Janie—Janie—that—that this solemn journey were but over."

Exhaustion had succeeded, and for a moment he ceased breathing. I quietly re-spread his hand upon the table and resumed my seat.

"I seem hovering—I know not where. No one is around me—no one comes to lift me through this solemn gloom. I hear nothing—solitary—solitary in this fearful way. This is—indeed—the valley of the shadow of Death. Where are they, my friends of the Future? Is this Death? Is this the Future? *Is the Spirit-theory then untrue?*" At last he cried in despair. "And am I—am I to live—thus? Oh! the fearful Hell of an Eternal Existence alone! no sight—no hearing—no God—no Heaven, (as I had been told,) no light—Great God! no darkness!—all thought! My soul is consuming—consuming itself!—Can I live thus forever? O! for annihilation, for anything but this solitude! Why can I not peer through this gloom!—Horror, horror—where are these limbs of mine—I feel not my body around me! Oh! lost at length—lost to the green earth—and to my Janie—lost to the sweet harmony of companionship!—The past gone—the Future, a blank!—Great Eternity, am I a God? am I creative? will a world spring at my thought?—Yes, I create—but it is *thought* alone—for that is of my own essence. I must be dead. If you are here and I am not yet dead, tell Janie I will try and seek her, I know not how. Tell the world that in death the Spirit is fearfully and forever alone! Tell the world that death is terrible—"

The nervous twitching about the under jaw stopped; and from the very instant that he ceased to articulate, I was startled by finding the table slowly rising and leaning toward the bed. And as the jaw dropped and the strange shadow of death swept down like a curtain over his face, the table rose quickly and pressed firmly and steadily against the bedside, as though it were attracted toward the dead body by an immense power.

We were all now around him. The Doctor, who was on the opposite side to us, slowly laid Mr. Lane's right hand, which he had been holding during the dying scene upon his breast, and we remained gazing, awe-struck at this strange death. I believe that for a moment, my heart actually ceased beating. There was an oppressive pause, which must have lasted at least five minutes. During all this time the table maintained its inclined position, and we still stood speechless, almost breathless. At length we were awakened from our trance by finding the table quietly descending to the floor. It then commenced tipping on two of its legs with a gentle rocking motion. I know not why, but I shuddered at the thought of breaking the death-like silence, so I took up the paper and wrote,

"Will you finish what you were saying?"

Imagine our terror at seeing the dead arm and hand which had been lying on the table, strike into rigidity, as though it were a piece of mechanism pulled by wires—lift slowly from the table and move toward me. When it had reached within a few inches of me, like lightning it darted forth and down upon my hand in which I was still holding the pencil. Its fingers grasped suddenly and tightly around mine. The touch was of an icicle. A nameless thrill and terror seized me. Mr. H. fell back; and slowly the locked hands before me moved across the table. The dead hand was so tracing the words that I could read them. They were upside down to itself. The following was the

RESPONSE.

"No, that Death is terrible. The silence and the solitude were the Dying—not Death! Tell them that it was a fearful, silent passage to me and those before me. But that it shall be so no longer in *secula seculorum!* Silent and strange—yes. But fearful—no. It was terrible and has been terrible from its uncertainty. Every Spirit hath known not when it feels that it has at length lost Earth, but it was doomed to silence and solitude forever! The struggle to know what it is, the futile efforts to see—to hear—followed by the great, all-absorbing consciousness and conviction that it is simply an existence, are fearful! But let the living listen! Hereafter, let those that die, be content to pause through the change; for the solitude lasts but a moment, when the dormant Spirit gradually develops. Then, there was nothing around it; now, he knows himself and that into which he enters."

"Are you in the midst of Spirits?" I asked aloud: and my voice seemed to resound unnaturally through the felt silence of the room.

RESPONSE.

"I had lost you for a time. I could see and hear nothing. I almost forgot the circumstances of my death. But then I was not dead. Slowly a sensation of lightness came over me, and I remembered all. I knew you all. I felt calm. I saw

your motions as if something apart from me; very much as you look down through clear water and watch the motions of the strange monsters of the deep—whose element is different from yours—whose actions are sometimes strange and unaccountable—with whom you have nothing in common."

Here was a pause again for about five minutes, during which the cold, dead hand relaxed from around mine. At length I asked again,
"Are you in the midst of Spirits?"

The strange invisible wires were pulled again, for the blue death fingers tightened around my own, and the locked hands traced the following

RESPONSE.

"I found myself gradually taking form—and moving through a long, grand, misty, undulating arch-way, toward a *harmony*, as it were, of far-off music. All was indefinite. I felt the intense consciousness of my own existence. Nothing more. At length, clearer and clearer I understood the new Universe into which I was entering, and a part of which I formed. I was alone. I heard no voice. But as I swept through the arch, I said as it were distinctly to myself this strange word, 'Forms.' At length it changed to 'FORMS—MOTION.' After I had swept on still further, it changed to 'FORMS—MOTION—HARMONY.' And then after a pause, to 'FORMS—MOTION—HARMONY—THE ARCH.' Why I repeated them I know not. Soon I was, as it were, uttering 'FORMS—MOTION—HARMONY—THE ARCH—CONNECTION.' At length the word 'BEAUTY' was added; and finally I found myself repeating it over and over again—

"FORMS—MOTION—HARMONY—THE ARCH—CONNECTION—BEAUTY—ETERNITY—ETERNITY—ETERNITY." I knew not what it could mean. I know now. I will tell you more to-morrow night. I thought and those in the flesh think, that all they conceive of is everything that exists, save God and the disembodied Spirits. Hence they call it the 'Universe.' I find myself now forming a part of a second Universe; as I have formed unknown through all ages. All have lived and shall live forever. I know it in the dim distance. You are immortal as truly in the past as you shall be in the future. Finity at the beginning must lead to finity at the end, and as you shall live forever, so have you lived forever: for your life is *infinite*. I will explain to-morrow night. Your first stage was not self-sentient. Peer not into the past. It will not advance His GREAT LIVING. Look to the Future. You are wearied. Remember Janie—see, she sits weeping. Farewell."

"But are you in the midst of Spirits?" cried I.

RESPONSE.

"O, wonderful—wonderful! O, altogether inexplicable. As you may suppose the rose unto her leaves—as you may suppose music unto the consciousness of man—as you may suppose the harmonious, and ever crossing, and unheard, and dimly understood converse always going on between the elements of a landscape—the cascade and the rocks—the liquid water's ripple and the shore—the forest and the sunbeams—so do the hosts of the new universe around me hold communion with each other. Direct, not impeded—silent, and dreamily beautiful and sublime! As different from the converse of man with man as is color from weight. Remember Janie—see, she sits weeping. Adieu."

"But I am not weary—I am not weary," cried I, quickly. "More—more!"

We asked and asked again for one more response—but one. The Spirit had, however, left us. I wished to know if they experienced the passage of time in the other world. But not one word could we obtain. At the word "Adieu," the dead hand fell off from mine. The clock struck three—and bewildered with the strange occurrences of the night, and intoxicated with excitement, I staggered out into the air. My friends soon joined me.

[The article was too long to be inserted at one time. The conclusion will appear in the next number.—ED. PROTER.]

THE MAGIC OF MUSIC.—Music speaks intelligently to all hearts. Its influence is universal. Its powers have been recognized in all countries, and its professors have ever been esteemed the most gifted of men. It has formed part of the services of nearly all religions; and in the ceremonies and pageants of courts has played no mean or unimportant part. In the altar service of the Jews it was no small adjunct; and in our own churches its strains are heard continually, doing its spiriting gently, in raising the feelings of the worshippers above the mean and sordid things of earth and time. Its empire is bounded only by the limits of the globe; and whether heard from the nose-blown flute and rude tum-tum of the South Sea Islander, or swelling in pealing harmonies from a thousand throats, it is alike potent and absorbing. In modern times its power and influence have been fully recognized; and, if the Orphean lyre no longer wakes the woods to melody, or tames the listening brutes, it at least performs its office rightly in humanizing and refining the minds of man. Lavater warns us to avoid the man who hates music and the voice of a child; and in that sentence, had he never written another, he discovers the well of human sympathy deep sunk within his heart.—*Portland Eagle.*

QUICK DIGESTION—HEALTHY FOOD.—Of all the articles of food, boiled rice is digested in the shortest time—an hour. As it contains eight-tenths nutritious matter, it is a valuable substance for diet. Snipe and pig's feet are digested almost as quickly. Apples, if sweet and ripe, are next in order. Venison is digested about as soon as apples. Roasted potatoes are digested in half the time required by the same vegetables boiled, which occupy more than 3-1/2 hours—more than beef or mutton. Bread occupies 3-1/4 hours—stewed oysters and boiled eggs are digested in 3-1/2 hours—an hour more than is required by the same article raw. Turkey and goose are converted in 2-1/2 hours—much sooner than chickens. Roasted veal, pork, and salted beef, occupy 5-1/2 hours—the longest of all articles of food.—*Scientific American.*

JUDGE EDMONDS AND THE SPIRITS.

In our paper of Nov. 4th, we published a letter from Judge Edmonds on the loss of the Arctic, in which was given the detail of some communications, purporting to come from the Spirits of those on board the Arctic at the time of the catastrophe. Since when, "the papers" have copied the same in whole or in part with such remarks as to the critic deemed called for. It would do little good, were we to inform the reader of what was said, and the Spirit in which it was said, but of this the reader may be assured that in all the notices we have seen, there is not to be found as much good sense or philosophy as should season ten minutes conversation, when two sensible and honest men talk together. We are very much obliged to "the papers," nevertheless, for giving the letter to their readers, as we have no doubt good will come of it.

We are not insensible to the genius of wit, and hope never to see the time when we shall surround the sallies of humor, even when the laugh is at our expense, but humor or wit that is far-fetched, particularly when the reflection that gives life to it is disrespectful alike to the living and the dead, must be a "melancholy guest" at best. The following has the mildest phase of banter about it, and humorously implies "doubt" while giving an outline of the narrative. We take it from the State Capital Fact. The editor says:

"It seems that the reputation of the Judge as an expounder of Spiritual mysteries, had even reached that world. He does not inform us whether any of the Spirits who came to consult him offered him any fee for his advice. One who came for counsel seemed to be in trouble, as many of the Judge's clients doubtless are, about his family relations."

Men may doubt the Judge's word, and consider the whole account as farcical, but sensible thinking men in these days, will be cautious how they commit themselves to a broad denial, because we have facts, well authenticated facts happening every day, that must be accounted for on some hypothesis as antagonistic to the popular philosophy of the times, as the seeing and speaking to Spirits by Judge Edmonds. For instance, we have in another column of this week's issue a statement of fact, that the catastrophe of the Arctic was seen by a medium in St. Louis, at the time of its occurrence, and spoken of by him. And we are full in the belief, that before the lesson of the Arctic is all known to this country, there will be such a number of well authenticated facts come to the notice of the reading public, that Spiritualism will gain very much by the information. To illustrate this statement, we give place to the following, which we clip from the Portland Eclectic. The facts are classified under what has heretofore been called "second sight," although the subsequent narrative proves them to be Spiritual sights, for the word "second" explains nothing, as it was called into being in an age of Spiritual ignorance, as its history can testify.

SECOND SIGHT.—One very extraordinary incident connected with the loss of the Arctic, and which is not generally known, is thus related by a New York correspondent of the Charleston News: "A young gentleman, lately residing in this city, fell through a hatchway in his father's store some time last summer, and was severely injured, one side of his body becoming completely paralyzed; and after a while he entirely lost the faculty of speech.—In this state he remained until the 27th ult., about the time of the accident to the Arctic, on board of which his father was known to be a passenger—when he suddenly started up in his bed and exclaimed, to the surprise of all present, 'My father is drowning!' fell back upon his pillow, and died. It was the first time he had spoken for months; it was the last forever." It is also reported that a day or two before the news of the Arctic's disaster reached New York, an individual in a high state of excitement rushed into the office of Mr. E. K. Collins, exclaiming that the Arctic had sunk, and only thirty lives were saved. He was treated as an insane person, and left the office.

Will some of our very wise editors and learned D. D.'s be so good as give us the philosophy of these facts, and say in what and how far they differ from what Judge Edmonds has asserted in his letter?—When they will explain this class of phenomena on some reasonable and probable hypotheses, the Spiritualists will of course retire, as their occupation will have melted into thin air. Good sense will not be surprised, therefore, that we keep all our detractors and abusers to the issue, until they give us fact for fact, and reason for assumption, or else acknowledge that they need forgiveness, as "they knew not what they did." It is the philosophy of charity and love to so think, yet it leaves in the mind a sad misgiving that there must be a superabundance of mental and Spiritual stupidity, if the parties are honest.

While feeling thus, we are free to say, that our experience warrants us in the remark that there are many to-day, as there were during the life-time of Jesus, who would not believe, though one rose from the dead. This is no assertion begotten of spleen or professional cant, for it has not only the self-existing facts to warrant its declaration, but the authority of general analogy as seen in the phases of mentality. We have all phases of character, from the idiot to the sage, from the sinner and criminal to the saint and angel, and why not the same extremes of belief, of faith, and ability, to receive new truths?

We make these remarks, that the reader may attach the true importance to the dogmatic doubter, for many are so sanguine of success in convincing the reason, that nothing but disappointment can come of it at present. No doubt the Spiritual forces now working on the mind will help forward a better state of mental health, but true progress is slow but sure.

That a persistent and a dogmatic skepticism should come from a Christian society, is of all things the most wonderful, since the faith of Christendom, in many of its cardinal theologies, has no better foundation than a belief in "DREAMS." Did we need to convict society of "popular infidelity," (to use a pulpitism,) this fact would be enough, but most men to-day are Christians in church and skeptics in the street, religious belief being a thing of seasons and places, to be put on and off like a hat or pair of gloves, as the occasion may require.—This may be natural in a transition state of the mind, but should never be considered as indicative of mental or Spiritual health. The following will show that dreams to-day are as truthful in many cases as they were in the days of Mary and Joseph, and should teach the thinker to be very cautious how to and when he plays the doubter. We hope the tendency of these facts will lead the reader to a reconsideration of Judge Edmonds, if he has any doubt as to the truth of the Judge's statement of fact.

PRESENTMENT.—How many strange incidents occur in one's lifetime that seem to have happened long ago, and have almost escaped from memory! The philosophy of dreams teaches us that they are mere faint reflections of the past—that they

hang upon some incident forgotten in our waking moments, but sit over the mind when it may be considered as it were, detached from the body, as angel-wings are supposed to hover over us in our slumbers. We are not seldom reminded of the force of the expression of the philosophic, though bewildered Hamlet:

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, Than dreamt in your philosophy."

A singular and affecting case of presentiment is related by the Cleveland Plain Dealer: "H. Stone, of Brecksville, in this county, in company with two others, went West a few weeks ago to buy land, leaving some business with the law firm of Wyman & Thayer, of this city, in which a brother and brother-in-law living in Brecksville were concerned. On Monday last, said brother-in-law and a near neighbor of Stone came to town, and visiting their lawyers on said business, had occasion to speak of Mrs. Stone, who he said was quite sick, in fact, entirely prostrated by a shocking dream she had had the night before. She dreamed that her husband was dead, had died on a steamboat, and in an awful and violent manner. The lawyers informed said neighbor that a steamboat had been burnt on Lake Erie the night before, but Mr. Stone's name had not appeared either among the lost or saved, and was probably not on board. While talking, the comrade and room-mate of Mr. Stone, a Mr. Farr, came into the office and announced that Mr. Stone was on board with him, slept in the same state-room, heard the alarm of fire, rushed out together into the cabin, which was so full of fire and smoke that they lost one another. Farr reached the deck and jumped into the Lake. Stone has not been heard of since. The last words he spoke were 'Farr, where are you?' 'Here I am,' said Farr, both so enveloped in smoke that they could not see one another. Farr happened to find the cabin door and escaped. Stone probably was smothered and devoured by the flames. The parties are all well known, and these facts need no authentication."

"The very night and about the very hour that the husband was grappling with this strange, but terrible death, the wife had a presentiment, so vivid that the reality could not affect her worse. Is there any religious or moral philosophy that can explain this?"

Yes, Spiritualism—for it gives not only the explanation, but the philosophy; outside of Spiritualism an explanation is impossible.

SPIRITUALISM IN CALIFORNIA.

The reader will find a long article on the first page of this paper, under the above head, which we recommend to his thoughtful attention. To the general reader, it could not fail to be interesting even as a work of fiction; what must it be as a narrative of fact? The Spiritualist has long since convinced himself that truth is strange, stranger than fiction, and yet he may never have dreamed of such a development of Spirit-manifestation as is here presented.

And yet, in point of fact, is there anything more singular or miraculous in making the hand of a dead man write than in possessing other dead matter with the powers of motion, intelligence and will? We say no! But there is something startling in the very conception, because we have been in the habit of making death so awful and anti-natural in all its relation to life, that the intelligence that a dead man has done thus and so, wakes doubt even among some of the Spiritual family. Naturally enough, therefore, this doubt of the genuineness of this article, as a statement of fact, comes to the mind of the reader, for there is not only all the antecedents of the old theology, but the suspicion which daily life is pressing upon him from *hoax-dom* to deter him from belief. Thus superstition, from ignorance within, and knowledge of the world, and the fear of ridicule from without, conspire to keep him in the bonds of mental slavery.

We cannot comprehend the *silence* of the Press on this startling instance of Spirit-intercourse on any other supposition. But this silence will not be the *pull* to bear this witness of "another and a better world" to oblivion. No! So stupendous a fact must come home to the conscious life of every man and woman, and bear witness in language not to be mistaken, gainsayed or denied.

Let the reader, however, think for a moment, on the possibility of three men giving their names to a document for the purpose of humbugging the credulous of the age, and what a state of Spiritual and mental corruption does it reveal? What a state of religious destitution and poverty is manifest in a society that can look on such religious frauds and call them *hoax*, and laugh at the whole thing as a capital joke. We are amazed at the cold indifference with which some persons speak of the impositions of society, remembering that the boy-coot Chatterton has been consigned to one of the public halls of public opinion, because he attempted a literary *fraud*. The publication of this fact has revealed two phases of society, each of which shows the absolute necessity for a manifestation of Spirit life to save us from mental death and Spiritual corruption.

1st. The general skepticism of Christendom on any and all facts that attempt to prove Spiritual and immortal life. This is the more startling from the contradiction manifest in the character of the American public, for while they manifest a larger share of intelligence, and have the reputation of being the most practical of all people, they at once ignore both in their determined rejection of all evidence on this subject.

2d. The supposition of *hoax* in the case of Mr. Lane and the other parties would involve such moral consequences as almost to crush the faith of man in his fellow.

Thanks to God, the dawn of a new dispensation gives promise that a better state of things is in store for the children of men, and there is no necessity of looking to total or native depravity for consolation, since we have not only the direct testimony that the parties connected in the narrative, are true and honest men, giving the plain but startling facts as they were developed before them, but the corroborative testimony which the Spiritual phenomena for the past four years gives, is confirmatory of the whole statement. For fear, however, that any one should allow their doubts to mislead their judgment and good sense, we give the following letter sent to Judge Edmonds from San Francisco, as to the genuineness of the facts stated.

We copy from the Sacred Circle for November, and make these remarks that the reader may allow the narrative to do its perfect work. "As thy judgment, so be it unto thee."

JUDGE EDMONDS:—Dear Sir—You will doubtless see an article published in the September number of the Pioneer Magazine (a California monthly), entitled "The Eventful Night of 20th and 21st of August, 1854." There is great doubt existing in the minds of some of our community as to whether said article is fiction or fact. I can only say that I know Mr. Farr, the narrator of the incidents and the editor of the Magazine, that he is a thoughtful man, and entirely incapable of giving publication to so important a falsehood as this would be if not true, and one calculated to do so much injury—that the little girl is living at the house where he boards. Furthermore, that I have seen Mr. Harris, who was present at the death-bed of Mr. Lane, and from him have learned that the facts are as stated. Furthermore, Mr. Farr is a writing medium. I know that Mr. Farr must have been very much annoyed by inquiries just on the eve of the departure of steamers; some of whom I know he has sent off rather cavalierly, without giving them any satisfaction; therefore I went directly to Mr. Harris, from whom I learned that about him which I have written above.

P. S.—I place you in possession of the above facts, and you know best how to judge of them. I have made inquiries, and cannot but think the article is true. J. E. A.

THE DRAMA: MRS. EMILY P. LES-DEBNIER.

While in a very broad and comprehensive sense "all the world's a stage and men and women mere players," we have those among us who seek the stage proper, that they may the better reflect what the rest of the world are attempting to perform.—The drama of to-day, however, is sadly out of joint with the Spirit of a humanitarian and progressive literature; and like every other department of society, must be baptized in the fellowship of a new and expanding intelligence.

We find some indications of this progress in the Spirit and philosophy of the modern drama, and look upon it as a very significant fact. Much fault is found, however, with the stage, because of its lack of Spirituality and conformative tendency to the philosophy of the past; but a little reflection will save much criticism, for if it is the mission of the drama "to hold the mirror up to Nature," the stage from the very order of things, must follow in the path of civilization.

The constructive mind will see the importance of developing such phases of character as will call into being the dramatic elements, for a higher art, such as a refined civilization would delight to own and bless. The true reformer, therefore, will be the consistent friend of the stage, and rejoice in every effort made to develop the manhood and womanhood of its representatives, that their efforts may not pass from the mind of the observer, as a mere imitation, successful more or less, but that it may "live, more, and have a being" in the memories of the age, as the inspirations of a higher life, and the perfections of artistic culture.

In this particular the stage is on the advance, as many that are now attracted to the drama, as a profession, come with the spirit of a "first love," and some with the ripe culture, which long years of study and discipline have given them. The lady whose name heads this article is one of the few it has been our pleasure to know within the past few months, in whom we find much that qualifies her for public life, as writer, lecturer, or actress. It may be in selecting the drama, as a profession, she intends to unite the three, as we are informed she has already in the hands of some prominent publisher in Boston, an autobiography, which will appear in the early part of the Spring. We mention this fact, that the reader may know that the life of the lady has been one of events and culture. During her short stay in this City, she made her debut, which, if it was not all the critics could wish, gave rich promise for the future.

Any conclusion that may be predicated on the first effort of an aspirant, will in most cases be a failure, judging from the history of the stage. We have nothing to offer, therefore, but words of hope and encouragement, for the lady manifested not only a very true conception of the character, which was studied at short notice, but gave in some parts of the play, powerful proofs of dramatic genius.

We hope the Spiritualists will remember Mr. Wiseman Marshall, of Boston, and on all suitable occasions do what they can to reward him for the friendly and gentlemanly manner in which he seconded the desire of Mrs. Lesdernier to appear before a New York audience.

We could say much as to the acting of the evening, had we room for detail, but as we might be thought partial, we will finish our notice with the following, which we take from the Daily Tribune, of this City:

"Mrs. Lesdernier, the well-known poetical reader, made her first appearance on the stage on Wednesday night at the Metropolitan, as 'Evadne,' in Shiel's tragedy of that name. She was supported by Mr. Eddy and Mr. Marshall. There are various opinions of the measure of success achieved by Mrs. Lesdernier; some so very flattering that they must have been colored by personal friendship. While her success was clearly not a triumph, it was certainly flattering for a debutante. She showed a very proper idea of the part, but wants acquaintance with the stage, and more ease of gesture and flexibility of voice. There should be no difference between reading a play off the stage and reading it on; but there is, and Mrs. L. evidently, at times, forgot the actors around her, and read her part for a drawing-room audience. With more familiarity with stage business, and a careful study and exercise of her voice, she may become a valuable acquisition to the rapidly increasing army who look to the stage as the only theatre fitted for the proper employment of their education, their talents, their personal charms, or their family misfortunes."

SPIRIT-RAPPINGS.

I find a communication under this head in your paper of Nov. 4th, from Logan Sleeper of this city, in which he details some good test communications received from the Spirit-world, through the mediumship of Miss Sarah Jane Irish, who is now a resident of this city.

I was long since satisfied that there must be all shades of opinion in this sphere as well as the next, and all phases of development, but this phase of it surprises me more than any I have yet seen.

He asks the question, (and says he has often asked it of Spiritualists,) "What is there about it all that constitutes *real, intrinsic, definable utility*?"—Surely, our friend's faculties must have been sleeping when he propounded such a query. Will our friend tell us what is the utility of *social intercourse* in this sphere (or world)? What *real, intrinsic, definable utility* (only from qualifications) is there in an intercourse with our fellow-men, or wives and children? What utility in associating together in a church for instance, to hear the cheap Bible read and discussed upon? I ask him this question, because one answer does for both, and when he gives a satisfactory one, he has answered his *own query*. But for fear he will not answer it, I will tell him that if social intercourse is of any "real, intrinsic, definable utility" in this world, it surely is as much or more in the next, and I will refer him to Genesis for the fact that man was "created not to live alone."

But our somnambule friend loves to harp upon the fact that the medium receives pay. He would have her rent and furnish a room, pay her board and all, that he might find "an amusement as in an idle dream," forgetting in this sleepy mood, that he can not attend the "cheap Bible reading" that he speaks of, for less than a \$8000 pew, and ten per cent assessed yearly on that to keep a "cheap Bible reader" and "exponent" in bread and butter, and black clothes and white neck cloths. Let any man *casually* enter a church, and he will no doubt be welcomed to a seat, but let the same man attend there constantly for a year, and how soon our friend would wake up and dun him for his per cent, and if he would not pay it, compel him to leave; why, it is very cheap. No, Mr. Sleeper, there is more money spent in building church-steeple and putting bells in them, than would keep the "poor we have always with us."

But our friend went there determined not to be convinced in the reality of Spirit-communication, and having that fact clearly proven to him against his will, he falls back upon his fourth-qualified utility. Never mind, Mr. Sleeper, *prove the fact of Spirit-intercourse*, and we will find the uses of it, and by

that time our friend will probably be awake enough to see the light shine clear and bright.

St. Louis, Nov. 7, 1854.

DO THE SPIRITS OF CHILDREN REMAIN NEAR THE EARTH-SPHERE?

This question has been with us for many years, fundamental as it is to the philosophy of experience, and very naturally is suggested by the following communications. There is a conclusion about them which may enhance their value. It will be known by a comparison of dates, that the one comes as it were in answer to the other. Whether sister Hyer will find the needed information or explanation in it, she must say. We find marked significance in the communications, as they awaken convictions that to-day act as consolation, and suggest a philosophy on the death of children, which all the wisdom and goodness of Deity. It cannot be otherwise than consoling for the mother and father to know that the Spirit of their darling is near them, depending much on their culture and purity for progress and growth. In the present undeveloped condition of the earth, premature death is inevitable, and children are mostly subject to death of children, which all the wisdom and goodness of Deity. 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