

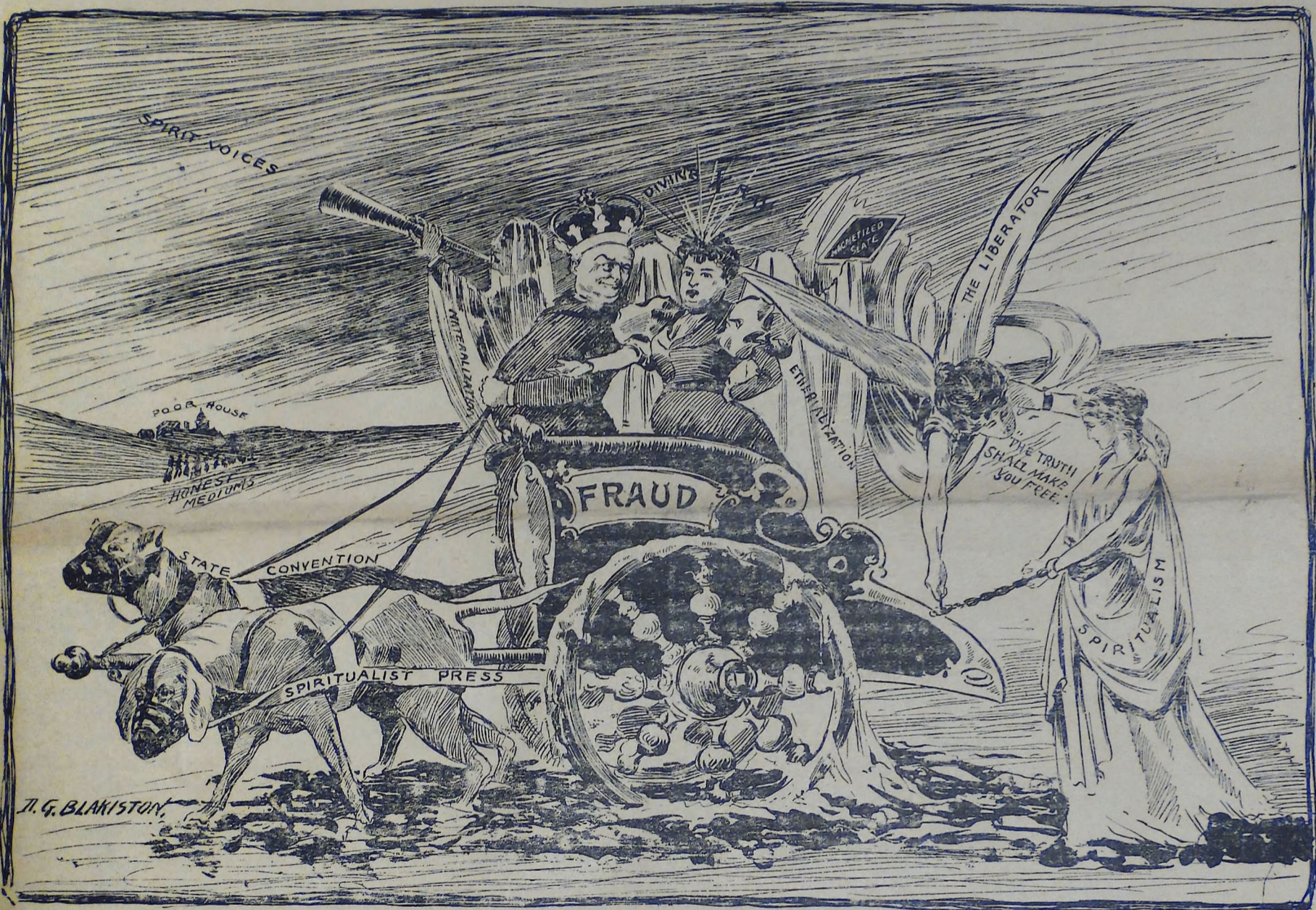
# THE LIBERATOR

*The Truth Shall Make You Free.*

VOL. I.

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., SEPTEMBER 15, 1898.

No. 2



### The Present Situation.

## THE PRESENT CONDITION OF SPIRITUALISM.

Dr. T. Wilkins in the *Progressive Thinker* makes some very timely remarks upon the above topic which we reproduce here as fitting accompaniment to our illustration.

There is no use dodging or evading the situation; it confronts the spiritualists of the world and the question is what are we going to do about it? Personally we are going to do our level best to educate the people concerning

deceptive phenomena until it shall become general information and no one need be deceived by such shallow tricks, and then the fraudulent medium will have to resort to some other means of obtaining a livelihood. Commercial mediumship is at the bottom of the whole swindling business, and the sooner it is done away with the better for Spiritualism.

But here is what Dr. Wilkins says: "For many years there has been settling around and about the base of our cause a great variety of fraud. Persons without knowledge of the real

truth and its sublime relations to the future of man; persons with no interest at stake save to operate along the line of the mysterious for money-getting; persons without conscience and without honor, have so enwrapped the phenomena in fraud, in imitation, that we, today, hardly know where to find the genuine in physical manifestation, and know not where to find it in all the superabundance of so-called phenomena now presented.

With their perfect system, their central and local secret organizations, their schools of practice in legerdemain

along the exact line of imitation, their methods of getting pointers and recording them and passing them around, they have either driven genuine mediums from our ranks into other avocations or into their own, where, with a few instructions and a little practice, they find it possible to produce better and more clinching tests than through genuine mediumship.

For instance, it is easy, when you have names, dates and locations to memorize, with a few moments preparation, to go on the rostrum or in the  
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## MY EXPERIENCE IN SPIRITUALISM

—BY—

BISHOP S. GARRISON.

Human experiences in whatever direction would be valueless were it not for the lessons to be derived from them teaching others how to avoid the needless suffering similar lines of conduct would entail.

When a man has been lured from the broad highway of honor and integrity by a glittering "Will-o-the-wisp" into the swamps and jungles where abide deadly and venomous things, and after vainly striving to grasp the elusive object, realizes at last the fruitlessness of his search and is not too deeply imbedded in the mire to extricate himself he will seek to regain the highway and warn others against a like misfortune.

If, in giving this, my personal experience, in laying bare my own life, revealing its weakness, uncovering its wounds, and bringing from the oblivion of the past its painful memories shall have the effect of opening the eyes of others to the actual conditions around them, and save even one human being from gaining this knowledge through the unhappy channels it was gained by me I shall feel that my effort has not been in vain, and that, to some extent at least, reparation has been made for the past wrongs and mistakes. I am well aware of the criticism, antagonism and perhaps even persecution this departure will evoke from my former, spiritualistic friends and associates; but I shall meet it fearlessly and am prepared to prove and demonstrate the truth of my statements.

"Truth wears no mask; bows at no human shrine; she only asks a hearing." Therefore, I shall need no masks, no confederates, no paraphernalia, nor darkness. The only "conditions" desired are that all prejudice and pre-conceived opinions be laid aside and that from the evidence adduced the case shall be decided.

I was reared according to the strictest orthodox rule—my father being a Presbyterian clergyman, and most earnest, conscientious man. When I arrived at manhood my knowledge of the great world beyond the prairies of Iowa and the plains of Kansas was limited to that obtained from books; but my ambition was great and my pride brooked no restraint nor limitation when a course of conduct had been marked out and decided upon.

I knew nothing of Spiritualism until after my marriage, and even then, although my wife was a believer, I would not allow the subject discussed in my home. With my superior wisdom I would soon cure her such a belief. Being head of the family, my word was law, or, at least I thought so, which was the same to me. I had no charity for people who did wrong, or who did not believe with myself.

I was prosperous in business, and successful in politics; was elected to fill responsible public offices—made money and friends in plenty. When about in the zenith of prosperity a cloud became visible in the horizon, which, although at first "no larger than a man's hand," gradually spread until it obscured the light of day, and left me in a starless night of hopelessness and despair. This cloud was Modern Spiritualism—or that which, from Maine to California, across the seas and in every land passes current therefor.

### HOW IT COMMENCED.

Hearing of some wonderful phenomena occurring among the spiritualists I mentioned the matter to my wife, who manifested no surprise but merely remarked, "I told you so." She then informed me that I could go and have a "sitting" with the medium and find out the truth for myself. "Why," said she, "I have had many sittings, and my guide gave me a message on a slate saying that you would become interested and believe." She then produced the slate containing the "message" for me to read. A communication from her "guide," indeed! Why, I always supposed that I was her guide, and yet all the time she had been having sittings with a medium without asking my permission. I enquired who wrote upon the slate and she replied, "The spirit did it."

It seemed incredible that my wife could believe anything so absurd. She said that it was not a matter of belief, but of knowledge with her and I could know for myself by investigating. "Why," said she, "it only costs three dollars for a sitting, and your mother might give you a message. She gave me one and said she was with you all the time. She is a lovely spirit. I saw her at a materializing seance and she wanted me to ask you to come next time."

I said, "why did you not tell me you were going to such places?" "What nights did you go?" She replied, "Friday nights, when you were at the Odd

Fellows lodge. I did not want to bother you about it, and the spirits said it would all come out right."

I told her I would look into the matter and soon stop such nonsense. She looked like she pitied my ignorance and said that if it was not true she would like to know it. The mediums she recommended were George D. Search and Henry Slade. She told me about getting "controlled" and "entranced" and of spirits talking to their friends in that way. It was all new and strange to me and I determined to solve the problem for myself.

How little we know what strange experiences await us, when we trim our sails, launch our boats, and venture out into an unknown sea on a voyage of discovery.

### MY FIRST SITTING WITH A MEDIUM.

A short time after this conversation with my wife I called upon Mr. Search and arranged for a "sitting" the following day. He told me to bring my own slates, which I thought a very fair proposition, thinking it would be impossible under such conditions to be imposed upon by any sort of trickery. The next day I was promptly on time with my slates ready for my first seance with a medium. I found him a pleasant, agreeable person, who seemed honest and anxious to please. We sat down at a small table and I produced my slates all ready for the spirits to write upon. He merely glanced at them and asked me to place my hands upon them. Very soon raps were heard upon the slates and table. The medium said that the spirits would communicate by raps while the writing was being done. I was greatly interested, and asked many questions receiving answers by the spirits rapping. The medium seemed nervous; his arms twitched and he frequently shivered in a convulsive sort of manner, which excited my curiosity and I enquired if he was ill. He replied that the spirits "drew" on him for the force which enabled them to write. When the raps announced that the writing was completed I opened the slates, which had been held under the table a portion of the time, and found them covered with writing. I was greatly surprised, for the communication was signed with my mother's name, and resembled her hand writing. My mother died when I was but a young child and I had always been taught to love and revere her memory. Among my choicest treasures was an album of poems written by her own hand, and the similarity of the writing on the slate to that in the album was so great the evidence of its authenticity seemed confounding.

The gulf of death was spanned; and here was the sainted mother whose love and guidance I had missed through all the experiences of boyhood and youth now come to advise and counsel the mature man through this strange agency. It seemed incomprehensible to me; but I grasped it eagerly as a proof of a future life of immortality for man; and was delighted with the beautiful thought that the guardianship of angels was a reality susceptible of demonstration. I engaged the medium to hold seances in my home and invited my friends to attend and be convinced. They suggested "test conditions" to which the medium complied even proposing greater tests than we had thought of exacting of him.

The result was that he succeeded in satisfying us beyond a doubt. I was in daily communication with my mother, and she advised me upon all important matters. How well the advice turned out will be seen later on.

### SITTING FOR DEVELOPMENT.

William Lloyd Garrison was installed as my own particular "guide," which seemed quite natural and in harmony with my aspirations as I was related to that grand man by ties of blood and was proud of the kinship; and equally proud of his guidance as a spirit. I sat for development for I am told that the spirit world had selected me to do a great work, (perhaps I was commencing to do it now.) I was also told to introduce the medium—Mr. Search—to the public, and I built a commodious hall for spiritual meetings, and did all in my power to spread the truth, as I then believed. It was my pleasure to follow such advice which included caring for the medium to the extent that he should not be bothered about making a living, or money matters and he would develop into the greatest medium on earth. Many people have been told the same thing regarding other mediums, and have believed them to be superior beings, divinely appointed, and set apart as chosen messengers of God and the angel world.

The spirit said I would become a great medium; which was exceedingly gratifying news; for if there is anything that will please the vanity and stimulate the ambition of the average spiritualist it is to be told that he will some day be a great and wonderful medium. It is the dearest wish of his heart, the treasure he most earnestly covets and for which thousands spend their time "sitting" to

develop, and their money to obtain, upon the specious promises of some "developing medium."

Books have been written to meet this demand, with full instructions for the formation of "circles," and how to obtain some one or more of the different phases; as any person who is sufficiently patient and persevering can do, provided he sits long enough. Sometimes this desire for mediumship becomes almost a mania as in the case of Miss Jenny Leys, a brilliant and talented young woman and public speaker, who came from the eastern States and took a cottage in Los Angeles, where, in company with a single female attendant and companion she remained in retirement sixteen years sitting for materialization. She had been promised that if she would do this, Jesus Christ would materialize and stand by her side upon the lecture platform and deliver the address in person. She believed it would certainly come to pass, and thus wasted the golden years of a glorious womanhood, until her hair became white as snow, and she was forced to quit the abode in which she had been a willing prisoner, in solitary confinement, so far as the outside world was concerned. No human foot was permitted to cross her threshold during all that time for fear of "disturbing the conditions." The few friends who sought her out could sit upon the vine covered veranda and converse with the spiritual captive; but they dared not enter the sacred precinct of the home, and only at rare intervals was a favored friend allowed even that privilege.

There were many facts in connection with this business of which I was at that time quite ignorant or my enthusiasm might have assumed a milder form. It was a subject of perplexity to me because all my friends did not accept the evidences presented as "proof palpable" of spiritualism; but here again the "guides" came to my rescue by assuring me that such people were not sufficiently progressed to grasp spiritual truths, in fact, were spiritually blind.

It was rumored that the medium was in the habit of getting intoxicated and was addicted to other vices; but I could not believe anything against such a "perfect instrument of the angels."

#### A GREAT SURPRISE.

One day on my way home from my office I met Mr. Search in an intoxicated condition at which I was greatly surprised and distressed. I told my wife what I had witnessed and she said it was either his "Indian control" or an undeveloped influence; and I should have brought him home with me and taken care of him until the control departed and he had gained his normal state.

This was astonishing information concerning the dangers and irresponsibilities of mediumship. The idea of my mother having to communicate with me through such an instrument seemed very repugnant; but such was the philosophy of my new religion as taught by those around me. If a good spirit could control a medium why not an evil one as well? It seemed plausible enough from that standpoint of reasoning. Still, it could hardly be considered an enviable position at all times, though its compensations and pleasures were many.

At seances the spirits were noticeably partial to good looking young women; the deceased husbands of charming widows frequently controlled the medium and demonstrated their continued affection by warm kisses, fond embraces and the same old endearing names all of which were accepted and reciprocated by the bereft ones in the most touching and pathetic manner. Old men received messages from the long departed sweethearts of their youthful days, and frequently such spirits materialized and spoke words of endearment and tenderly caressed the now aged lover, which brought a new light into the dim eye and fanned to light the still smouldering spark of an almost forgotten love among the dead ashes upon the altar of the "long ago." Sometimes spirit brides materialized for these old veterans and informed them that the dear old wife who had been the loving earthly companion for a quarter or half century was not the true spiritual affinity, and would be supplanted "over there" by the beautiful spirit bride, or true soul mate. Sometimes the more accommodating ones suggested the selection of temporary affinities from among the number of females who were similarly situated.

Mediums are not considered responsible for their acts, or, at least they are allowed great latitude and freedom. They are considered as open doorways through whose organisms come thronging eager multitudes of spirits to communicate with earthly friends. Some are good, others bad; dying does not change their natures and the old appetites and passions cling to them as a garment in spirit life and can only be overcome and outgrown by coming in contact with a physical organism. There are mediums who believe they are doing a mighty missionary work liberating earth bound spirits in this manner.

Mediumship, like charity, covers a multitude of sins; and the greater the

sinner the surer the test of his irresponsibility, or "unbalanced condition" owing to constant spirit control. All this may seem incredible and impossible of belief to an intelligent mind upon its first presentation; but it is accepted and taught by spiritualists generally, and forms the strongest safeguard and protection mediumship can present against the attacks of critics and opponents.

Much that is beautiful and seemingly in harmony with reason, moral and social ethics is presented along with its absurdities and vagaries so that which would repel the student at first is gradually overlooked. It was very difficult for me to ignore the teachings of my childhood, and think that the blameless life of my respected and honored father was not, after all, an example worthy of emulation, and accept without grave misgivings the entire doctrine as practiced and advocated by phenomenal mediums.

"Vice is a monster of such hideous mien,  
That to be hated, needs but to be seen;  
But seen too oft, familiar grown its face,  
We first endure—then pity—then embrace."

Slowly but surely was the net of deceit and treachery woven around me and my home, and most bitter and humiliating was the awakening. I was earnest and enthusiastic and spent money freely in the cause. When sceptics said that the medium was a fraud and trickster I demanded that they explain the trick—show how it was done. It is always absurd to cry fraud without being able to prove it. To know the secrets of masonry one must join the order; and the same is true of physical mediumship.

#### ADVICE ON BUSINESS.

Believing as I did in the genuineness of the communications it is easy to comprehend how blindly I followed the advice given by my supposed spirit friends. At their direction I embarked in enterprises having in view the employment of men and women who were out of work and in destitute circumstances. I built a large fruit cannery, and in my zeal to obey the spirits and be a benefactor to the poor I soon lost everything invested through the carelessness and incompetence of those employed and trusted, and a lack of knowledge of the business on my own part.

I also invested largely in real estate, and built houses to rent expecting handsome profits as the spirits had promised. It was not long before I realized there was a mistake somewhere. My houses were tenantless, my city lots unsold and greatly depreciated in value; my canning factory a dead loss and my business in a crippled condition generally. About this time Mr. Search came to me asking for a loan. I had been accustomed to advancing him money in various sums whenever he wanted it; but on this occasion I hesitated and told him we would have a sitting first and see what the spirits would say on the slates. He replied that if I would give him fifty dollars he would show me how to get my own slate writing. I did not understand what he meant, but told him that if he could develop me I would gladly give him that amount and much more. He agreed to meet me at four o'clock that afternoon and give me the first lesson. I was hearing a case of assault and battery that day but am afraid I did not pay much attention to the testimony; I was restless and uneasy and finally dismissed the defendant and adjourned court.

#### THE FIRST REVELATION.

At the appointed time Mr. Search was promptly on hand. His first statement startled me. "The whole business is a 'fake,'" he said. I told him to go on and not talk foolishly. He asked for some slates and I happened to have some in my office, taken there to show my friends. He laughed when they were produced, and said that the messages they contained had been written by himself.

Before proceeding to explain he exacted of me a promise of secrecy, saying it would do me no good to "give him away"—that spiritualists would not believe it, and other people would only laugh at me for having been so easily fooled. It was not necessary to be told this, as I had already decided to say nothing to any one until I had received greater proof than one man could furnish that a faith having so many adherents, and presenting, for its foundation, such an array of wonderful phenomena, was like a house founded upon the sand which would fall before the first gale of crucial, scientific investigation, or crumble into ashes under the scorching rays of the searchlight of truth.

Well, it is needless to say that the writing was produced on the slates and the medium explained how it was done. He showed me many processes by which slate writing was done, and the methods employed by the most prominent

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## Are Spiritualist Afraid of the Truth?

Before issuing the first number of *The Liberator* we were laboring under the delusion that the great body of spiritualists were honestly seeking the truth from every available quarter and source. We knew that the majority of them had been deceived and victimized by pretending mediums and were accepting and believing as true, many false and erroneous things. But our faith in the good in humanity was greater than our knowledge of evil, and we confidently believed and expected that the greater number by far preferred the truth, instead of a lie, knowledge instead of ignorance, honesty instead of dishonesty. But we were mistaken. That is, if the State Spiritualists Association represents the honest sentiments of the great number of Spiritualists throughout the State. We can scarcely believe that it does so represent them. We believe that the officers and delegates chosen by the people at large were so selected because they possessed the confidence of the people who gave them their votes and who believed they would honestly represent them in executive session and declaration of principals. Did they do it? Having been in touch with the general sentiments of Spiritualists for many years in our public work we feel qualified to answer emphatically *no*. On the contrary it is our honest opinion that the Spiritualists of this State were sold out by their representatives, in the State Convention, to the fraud element in this city which at the present time has got the upper hand and have muzzled the Spiritualist press and captured the works. When *The Liberator* was being circulated among the delegates, during the Convention, by Mrs. May Drynan, president of the Peoples Spiritualist Society, a member of the State Board of Directors forbade her disposing of any more copies of the paper in the hall under penalty of arrest if she persisted. But the people got them all the same and the result was that it set them thinking. Why should any officer of the State Associa-

tion or any other Society object to *The Liberator*?

Because it contained more truth to the square inch than any spiritualist had ever before had served up in like manner. It unmasked some of those who stood in high places and considered their assurance and egotism sufficient guarantee against criticism or exposure. It dragged the idols from their pedestals, and unvailed the secrets of the cabinet, seance, and even platform which is disgraced by pretense and humbug. The exposure was not the statement of one man or one woman; it was the unrefutable testimony of men and women who have never engaged in mediumship as a business, and also of those who are now thus engaged and are honest in it, and of one who had drunk to the depths life's bitterness through having been deceived, and almost destroyed through the wickedness of pretended mediumship, but who has renounced the work, and the follies and vices consequent upon its practice. His statement was the plain, unvarnished tale of one who has suffered, and struggled out of darkness into light, out of bondage into liberty, out of weakness into strength to live and do the right, and help others to come out and do the same. Yet all this evidence counted as naught against the lying tongues of those who were arrayed against the truth, against honest investigation, against genuine mediumship, and against those who dared to expose the fraud and denounce its upholders. The representatives of the people ignored the charges brought against the frauds, condoned their work, endeavored to suppress the *Liberator*, and placed themselves on record as standing in with, and endorsing pretenders and impostors by placing them upon the platform as honest, worthy mediums, to deceive and mislead the people. There were some honest people among the officers and delegates who would have been glad to have the matter investigated; but fear of criticism, and the slanderous attack such action would provoke, caused them to remain silent. And so the farce went on, and they tried to appear satisfied and happy, while all the time the angel of conscience was whispering—Seek to know the truth, investigate, search for it; enquire into and prove all things, and then stand by the right at all hazards, even unto death.

Bishop S. Garrison, teacher of slate writing, materialization, etherialization, spirit picture making, reading sealed letters and ballots, cabinet, dark, and musical seance phenomena as practiced by prominent mediums everywhere. Instructions by mail, and in private classes. For terms address,  
Bishop S. Garrison  
584 Page St., San Francisco.

## BROTHER LUNT WEARS IT

The *Medium* of Los Angeles has come out with the "muzzle" on and placed itself on record as among the number of self-righteous spiritualists who have no other answer to make to the charges preferred against frauds and pretenders than to throw mud at those who are honestly and conscientiously trying to rid spiritualism of the counterfeiters who are passing their spurious coin for its pure gold. There is but one question for spiritualists to decide—do they want honesty in mediumship or dishonesty? Do they want the truth or do they want fraud?

If any statements made in the *LIBERATOR* are untrue, if any person has been misrepresented, why do they not *disprove* the charges in some more honorable way than by imputing our motives to "revenge or "getting even" on some imaginary foe; or why do they use the coward's *only* weapon—slander, instead of meeting the charges as they should. The truth will not suffer by having falsehood exposed; and if spiritualists cannot bear the truth they had better cease asking for it, as it will certainly be told and their idols be unmasked.

Bro. Lunt indulges in a great deal of cant about the "persecution of honest mediums" and the importance of having it stopped, etc. We do not know of any one who is trying to "persecute" honest mediums, although some people may think that has been the policy of the *Medium* for some time past. Still, we always thought its editor *meant* all right, although he blundered along like one in the dark, as he evidently was, and still is as to the fake question. He says:

"Our philosophy teaches that "restitution" must be made in all cases for wrongs done to others before reformation is complete and confidence restored. Has Garrison returned to his dupes any of the cash he robbed them of during his faking career?"

There you have it in plain English; has the money been returned? No higher estimate is placed upon a man's good resolves and earnest desire to do right than the question of dollars and cents. No other "restitution" is considered equivalent to the demands of justice from the standpoint of the editor of the *Medium*. No matter if the wrongdoer repents in sackcloths and ashes, acknowledges his mistakes to the world, reveals all his weaknesses, and covers up his better qualities of mind and heart, in a conscientious endeavor to tell the whole truth regarding the wrong done, that none may be deceived or imposed upon in like manner by others still in the business who have not moral stamina enough to come out and do likewise. Is there no "restitution" in this?

No wonder others do not turn from their evil ways. There is no encouragement, no inducement, no incentive to do the right, when all the bloodhounds of hell are let loose upon the "turncoat," as he is called by his old associates. On the contrary, they continue their damnable work, and are endorsed by the spiritual press, societies, and conventions. They are highly respectable and make money enough out of their dupes in and out of the ranks of spiritualists to buy their way to the highest places of trust and honor that State and National Associations can confer. There is no *money* in telling the truth, never has been. It is

uphill work all the time and all the way. If "Garrison and Coonley" had continued in the "fake" business, they would have had plenty of friends and money. They were not "driven out" of the work. They had a large patronage, and the good will and friendship of the rest of the crowd and had never been injured in any perceptible degree by exposures. They gave it up voluntarily, and told the truth for the purpose of opening the eyes of those who honestly believe and are being victimized through their blind credulity. It requires considerable courage and a strong conviction of right for any one to take the position those men have taken, and maintain it in the face of all the abuse and scorn that honest (?) spiritualists have heaped upon them.

If the Nazarene were on earth to-day and should say as he did of old: "Let him who is without sin among you cast the first stone"—how many spiritualists' think you, would be "firing rocks" (as the boys say) at Garrison and Coonley? NOT MANY.

## "Exposing" Spiritualism.

Some mistaken souls are crying out that Mr. Garrison and Mrs. Schlesinger are "exposing Spiritualism." Nothing could be farther from the truth. Spiritualism cannot be "exposed" by any one. There is nothing concealed about it consequently nothing to expose or uncover. Spiritualism *per se* is simply a belief in a future life, and the possibility of communication with the so-called dead. It is as old as humanity, and forms the basis of every religion under the sun. All orthodox churches teach the "Communion of Saints," and among the Catholics it is not uncommon to find those who claim to have held converse with heavenly visitants. The exposure of fraud as practiced in *the name of spiritualism* does not effect spiritualism proper. A truth cannot be exposed. A lie can be shown to be a lie, and fraud can be exposed as fraud. Spiritualism, as a revelation of a future state of existence as given to the world by illuminated minds all down the ages is grand and beautiful; and among its later day exponents are some divinely gifted men and women; but like every other great movement for the upliftment and liberation of the race there are those who would block the wheels of progress and check its career of usefulness by covering it over with the slime of fraud, pretense, and hypocrisy until it becomes obnoxious to the sight, and a stench in the nostrils of the honest people. Those who undertake to remove the blocks from the wheels, unloose the chains, and free it from the load of fraud, are giving their lives to a most thankless task at the present time, and making of themselves targets for the arrows of hatred hurled at them by the enemies of true spiritualism masquerading under its name, and enjoying its protection.

Continued from 1st page.

## THE PRESENT CONDITION OF SPIRITUALISM.

seance room and produce apparently unobtainable evidence of spirit return. Conditions are not needed. You have your "piece"; just memorize and deliver it. When you go into another town (always on your list) repeat the method and win the esteem of Spiritualists, the curiosity of investigators and the encomium of the press, and your way is made; your fortune is assured.

Where are we at? Let us be frank and confess that we know, but do not know exactly how to extricate ourselves.

We can go on talking about the beautiful land, the beatitude of spiritual endowments, the "sweet by and by" from our rostrum; we can organize and adopt all the articles of faith, "resolutions of knowledge and our good intents" our "declarations of principles," etc., that our "many men of many minds" can project; we can sing of "the beautiful golden sometime" and hold a "Jubilee every month, but unless we can uncover and present to the world a genuine phenomenon somewhere, one that we as a body can swear by, something we can recommend without glancing around and pausing to think where to find it, we have nothing superior to that recorded in the Bible, and that has been presented for several hundred years.

We must have tangible proof in support of Spiritualism. We had it in the raps fifty years ago; we have the raps still; we had the mental in A. J. Davis, even before the raps, and we have that phase yet; but for heaven's sake, if that is as far as we have gone with the genuine, let us have it. There is nothing in this imitation business that will not fall to the ground at the first expose, and leave those thus convinced either floundering in the deep sea of a cold and dark grave, or floating back into the arms of a Savior from whence they came, with a justifiable curse upon Spiritualism for having so deluded them.

Where are we at? We teach the world, or try to, that we have proof positive of a future life and the power to return under certain conditions, with the good news of great joy beyond the grave; and in our zeal, we allow our eyes to be blinded to the fact that, were all the imitators to turn state's evidence, within 10 days our "beautiful" truth would be completely upset in the eyes of the investigating, inquiring world and we would surely be at a loss to know "where we were at." The fact

is, were it possible to eliminate the fraud from our ranks to day and should each one not genuine, who has practiced under the name of "medium," give to the world the truth of their fraudulent work, we would just about be a total wreck as a Spiritualism before the world.

A medium may stand upon the platform and deliver name after name to audiences day after day, that are "regular clinchers," and the moment they are known to be from memory instead of from the "loved ones over there," they are lost so far as effect for the cause of Spiritualism is concerned.

We represent to the world, to-day, that there is such a phenomenon as full-form materialization. Where is it produced under unquestionable test conditions?

We claim independent voices; where are they heard?

We are presenting a variety of Punch and Judy, curtain and house-corner performances that seem very entertaining to the curious, which, if genuine are not at all convincing, because any one with a little practice under instructions can do the same—the longer the arm and the more cheek and nerve, the more mysterious the performance—but in a sleight-of-hand show they would be too slow to draw. Where are the genuine in this phase?

If we have the genuine in any or all these phases, let us have it and place it upon the rostrum, in the seance, in the home, anywhere, to get it before the world. If it must have certain conditions, provide them, and if we must have our conditions, always within the bounds of reason, let us exact them; anyway to get at the truth; we need it in our progress and must have it or we perish.

I may have faults that look grave and unpardonable to the eye of my acquaintances; you may have faults that are grievous to the sensitive tastes of your most intimate friends, but all should be overlooked in our effort to rise from the filth and slime of fraud in the name of our deceased loved ones.

It is impossible to find a perfect human being. We may find a model man or woman in morals according to the common acceptance of the term, and find outside of this no commendable characteristics. In the diversified ideas of mankind regarding the constituency of perfection, there is no way to arrive at a universal understanding. I may be immoral in the mind of one and moral in the mind of another, but there is no difference as to what constitutes fraud and misrepresentation along the line of Spiritual phenomena. That which is not genuine is a fraud,

and because one or another cannot see the mode of deception, makes it none the less a fraud and under rigid conditions it can be so proven.

Where are we at? Because you and I are convinced of the truth of spirit return, becomes no criterion for the world to believe it without proof. Our beautiful lingo of the proof that we have had weighs lightly with a world of independent thinkers who say: "Give us some proof, your theories are beautiful."

The world has become so worldly as to demand proof. For many years the Bible was all the proof needed, but Spiritualism took it away and proposed to substitute something more reliable, more tangible. "The Bible contradicts itself," we said. "There is deception there, somewhere." But what better have we until we eliminate the fraud from our cause?

Meu may say: "Let our opponents discover our fraud;" but that is the trouble. The world is discovering the fraud under our cloak. It is no part of the genuine, but where is the genuine? That is what the world and justice demands of us."

The above words are as true of the condition of Spiritualism in California as it is in the East or any other part of the country. When Spiritualists determine to settle this question, they can very soon do so; but it will never be accomplished by persecuting and villifying those who are honestly trying to let light in upon the darkness.

No statement made in this paper has ever been made through a feeling of revenge or "getting even" with any one. They have been published because they were facts which the people ought to know for their protection and safety, and with no other motive under the sun. It would have been far easier, and more profitable from a financial standpoint to have kept silent and retained the good will and fellowship of that class of people than to have antagonized them and incurred their hatred by exposing their work. There never has been any money made by telling the truth on any unpopular subject. The profit comes to those who keep silent and help cover up wrong. Besides, a lie has wings, and can travel faster than the truth which goes on foot always, and sometimes a begging.

### NOTES

We have a number of very encouraging letters from all over the country which will appear in the next issue.

The better element among Spiritualists endorse our work, and give us their material and moral support.

At the recent State Convention of Spiritualists in this city, one of the leading societies was not represented. Why? Because its membership, through its Board of Directors, had refused to submit to the dictatorship of the State Association. Why? Because its demands were arbitrary, foolish and unreasonable, and set aside the good judgment and common sense of the Society as a body, and questioned the ability of its officers to discriminate as to the fitness of people occupying its platform as speakers and mediums, and submitted a list of names of the only persons eligible to be thus employed, through virtue of having been employed, or endorsed by the State Association. We have the letters bearing upon the subject before us, and will copy them for the instruction and enlightenment of our readers.

Mrs. Hattie D. Wren,

Secretary to the Peoples' Spiritual Society, San Francisco.

Dear Madam and Co-Worker:—At the last meeting of the Board of Directors of the C. S. S. A., I was instructed to confer with you and request your honorable Society to conform to the resolution passed at our last Convention, viz.: "Resolved, that all chartered Societies be requested to recognize only those mediums who are endorsed by this Association in accordance with the above mentioned resolution, remain,

Yours fraternally,  
John Koch, Secretary.

Then follows the list of those thus "endorsed", among whom are such well known "fake" mediums as Mrs. J. J. Whitney, Mrs. Lizzie Fulton-Tuley, Dr. A. B. Coonley (since turned exposé), Prof. Fred. Evans, Edward K. Earle, Mrs. Mena Francis, and Maude L. Freitag. When the State Association has shown such lack of discrimination, and such inability to distinguish between genuine mediumship and outrageous fraud, it is unfit, as a body, to direct or control the action of subordinate Societies in regard to the selection of platform talent; and the Peoples' Society has shown its wisdom in its withdrawal from such an arbitrary and unreliable "guide."

The action of the State Association at its recent session in this city, has demonstrated beyond question its position regarding fraudulent mediums, and the sooner the honest spiritualists throughout the State understand it and sever their connection with such a weak, inefficient body, the better for the cause. No stream can rise above its head; and when the head of a Society is weak the body must be lacking in the elements vital to its existence.

Brother Newman notices THE LIBERATOR in a style characteristic of a man who feels called upon to say something mean, and is really too good at heart to do it according to the dictates of his "bosses." If the editor of the *Philosophical Journal* wanted to criticize the statements made in our first issue, why did he not attack Mr. Bore testimony against the frauds? He could not do it; and consequently toe lame attack on the man who gave it by his own personal experience and work with that class of people known as "persecuted mediums" by their dupes and supporters.

*Continued from page three.*

mediums. Still I was not satisfied. I could not believe that such a careful investigator as Professor Zollner, of the Leipsic University, the author of a work called "Transcendental Physics," which was the result of scientific experiments with the great medium—Henry Slade—could have been entirely mistaken, and deceived with a few tricks; although I could understand how an honest man, expecting honesty in others, might be imposed upon. But the medium went fully into the details of the work, explaining the various phases of phenomena, such as cabinet work—materializing, etherialization, trumpet speaking, independent voices, dark, and musical seance manifestation, spirit lights, raps, ballot tests, reading sealed letters, making spirit pictures on slates, handkerchiefs, etc. Platform tests as given by "stocked" mediums, who gave as tests while in a "dead trance and wholly unconscious," names and messages previously obtained and memorized for the occasion, were also explained and books of "exchange tests" produced in evidence. The enormity of the whole business fairly paralyzed me. To listen to a confession of such hypocrisy and deceit from a man whom I had taken into my home as a trusted friend and "spiritual adviser" was a terrible experience, and painful insight into human depravity.

## FURTHER REVELMENTS.

About this time I was preparing for a trip East, having been chosen by the Knights of Pythias as a delegate to the grand lodge of the world at Toronto, Canada, and I determined to investigate spiritualism still farther by visiting noted mediums in eastern cities. Mr. Search offered to give me letters of introduction which would enable me to gain the information desired. His letters read as follows:

"Friend A—, This introduces Mr. Garrison. He is on, and O. K.  
Search."

He said, "Just tell them you worked with me and it will be all right." Worked with him, indeed! Why, I began to think he had "worked" with me or "worked" me, and that to considerable extent.

The first medium I visited with my letter of introduction was Mr. Mott, the famous materializing medium of Kansas City, Missouri. I told him I was learning the business and wanted to see his work. I paid, and he explained. His seances were considered marvellous demonstrations of spirit power, and had I not been initiated beforehand would have been deceived as readily as were others. The dim, uncertain light, the soft music, the expectancy, hope, almost fear, the entire novelty of the situation, all have their influence and impress the visitor with a feeling of solemnity akin to awe and prepares the mind to receive and believe otherwise incredible things.

Under such conditions the exhibition of a piece of white cheesecloth before the black curtains of the cabinet takes on the appearance of the robes of an angel, and the rustle of a starched or silken petticoat sounds like the fluttering of angelic wings; and when the medium steps forth clad in a garment daubed in spots with luminous paint it seems that the very heavens have been opened and a celestial being arrayed in shining raiment has appeared in their midst. The possibility of the human brain to receive false impressions is great.

I visited mediums in St. Louis, Chicago, Detroit, Toronto, New York, Indianapolis, and other places and everywhere found the letters of introduction the open sesame to further revelations. I returned home disheartened so far as public mediums were concerned and decided to test some of the supposed reliable trance mediums of my acquaintance, and in my own household. Every one endorsed Mr. Search as a genuine medium; I then tried some of the tricks on them and it worked like a charm. Neither the mediums nor their guides detected the deception. I began to observe what was going on around me and soon discovered conditions of the gravest nature confronting me. I felt destroyed, and like one who had climbed to some lofty pinnacle and suddenly found the ladders by which he had ascended swept away. The moral and social ladder lay in ruins; the financial ladder would sustain me no longer; the political ladder was broken, and there seemed no way to get down but to fall—and I fell.

I cared for nothing, and took to drinking as a panacea for my troubles. I was like the man in Arkansas, I did not get drunk but just kept that way all the time. Out of the financial wreck enough was saved to leave my family in comfortable circumstances, and after procuring a legal separation and settling up my affairs as best I could, with what little remained I started for the Pacific Coast, leaving all the friends and associations of my life, not knowing or caring whither I would drift or what fortune or misfortune might await me.

## NEW EXPERIENCES.

When I first began to realize my condition I found myself in the State of

Washington, among strangers with not a dollar in my pocket and no prospects. That night I visited the Odd Fellows' lodge, and being a stranger was asked to make a few remarks. I chanced to glance at a beautiful emblem on the wall, of a bundle of sticks, illustrative of the strength of a united body, and referred to my own condition as a stick which had slipped from the bundle and was "broke." It was grim humor, but resulted in timely assistance, and an offer of employment from one of the brothers. This I gladly accepted and commenced work the following day as a carpenter. For about one year I labored in this manner and would have scorned the thought of making money as a medium. I endeavored to dismiss spiritualism from my mind and only referred to it as did Josh Billings to the snake hole, "When I see a hole with a snake's head in it I think the hole belongs to that snake."

I worked on as millions of men are doing—regarded as "only a common laborer," by men whom, at one time, I would not have considered my equals; but they were on top of Fortune's wheel now, and I was underneath, and that made the difference.

## MY PUBLIC MEDIUMSHIP.

Work becoming slack I drifted to Astoria, Oregon, where employment was again secured. The celebrated medium—Henry Allen—was holding seances and attracting much attention. My "boss" urged me to accompany him to the meetings but I declined, not wishing any new experiences in that line. He continued to press the matter and I consented to go.

There were about thirty people present at one dollar a head. It was a dark seance at which musical instruments were played upon, independent writing produced, and other manifestations. The people were delighted and accepted it all as the work of their spirit friends. There was a man making thirty dollars in an evening, and all the time engaged, while I worked all day at hard labor, for half a month, receiving less than that amount in compensation for the entire time. No wonder, that when a few weeks later my job was finished, the old story of man's temptation and fall was repeated in me. It is said that "man's extremity is God's opportunity;" but in this case the devil seemed to take advantage of the situation for I entered his service and found him a good paymaster so far as finances were concerned. I told some of my acquaintances that I was a medium and they arranged for me to hold a seance at once. The art had been well learned and it proved an easy matter to please the people and make many converts to Spiritualism. Money flowed into my pockets and from them into the till of the saloon-keeper, for I was obliged to drink in order to still the voice of conscience which constantly upbraided me for such unholy work. The fact—that there were hundreds of others—men and women all over the country from the Atlantic to the Pacific doing the same business was no excuse for me. I have no apology to offer and shall not attempt to make one. However, by way of atonement whenever I saw good, intelligent people getting too deeply involved, my own unfortunated experience would come before me and I would enlighten them. In no instance did I pretend the manifestations were other than they really were—the phenomena known as that of modern spiritualism. Some of those whom I enlightened used the information as I had done and engaged in the business as professional mediums, and are traveling over the country to-day and receiving the endorsements of Spiritual societies and the spiritual press. They work under the same auspices, and are doing more towards converting people to a belief in spiritualism than the most talented speakers in the ranks.

Among the number are the "Brockway family," Albert Cramer, Mrs. Sadie Johnson, and Alice Warnock, of Portland, Oregon; besides many others who served as "helpers," or accomplices in my own work. Of the latter number, known as "helpers" of mediums was George Washington Smith, of Astoria, J. T. McComas of Portland, Homer Alexander of Salem, and "Buck" Smith of Ranier, and many others in Oregon.

Before coming to California "stock tests" were furnished me by Hatfield Pettibone, a slate writing medium who had lived here, also Dr. Woods, another slate writer, Mr. and Mrs. Dr. Noyes, Mr. Newt, and others. Soon after my arrival in San Francisco I got into "the ring," and not only assisted other mediums but was assisted by them in circles and exchange of "tests." Even those not engaged in the work as physical mediums endorsed others who were, and could not in a single instance determine the nature of the phenomena, but gave their sanction to the rankest humbug believing it to be the work of the "dear angels."

In fact the staunchest supporters of physical mediumship, such as materialization and slate writing, with the many other fraudulent pretensions, are the

known and clairvoyant mediums who often claim they see their guides and other spirits in the cabinet when the commonplace investigator would see nothing. Many times have these genuine mediums come up to my cabinet and shaken hands with their "guides" and described them to the circle, when not even a "confederate" or "dummy" had been exhibited. There are also intelligent, cultured men and women, highly "inspirational" as that word is understood, occupying the public rostrum, who sincerely believe these phenomena to be the manifestations of spirit power and the proofs upon which the philosophy of spiritualism rests. Take away, or destroy the proofs and the whole fabric is reduced to speculation, theory and conjecture. Dr. Dean Clark, well known among spiritualists as an able speaker and writer, attended one of my seances and endorsed, and explained the manifestations as the production of spirits. Being considered authority on such subjects his endorsement was important; but as he was a medium it was strange his "inspirers" did not enlighten him.

Madam Florence Montague a most cultured and refined woman, a speaker of great eloquence and power, also a "psychic" or medium who answers questions, and reads articles from the audience psychometrically, attended one of my seances in Oakland and also went up to the cabinet and recognized her "guide" as the one who shook hands with her. If she can tell, by taking a glove or handkerchief, belonging to a person that individual's characteristics, with events past and future, why were her inspirations so much at fault that she could not distinguish the difference between my hand and that of a materialized spirit?

Dr. N. F. Ravlin who is widely known as an exponent of spiritualism was formerly a Baptist clergyman and for many years occupied a prominent place among the leading divines of Chi ago. I met him first at the Spiritual Camp meeting in Trestle Glen, Oakland, one year ago. He was a broad-gauge intellectual giant compared with the majority of people he was associated with. I felt sorry for him, and told him he was deceived and victimized by the mediums. He was at first quite indignant and asked if I thought he was a fool. I frankly told him he was and I could prove it. A list of "tests" to be given the next Sunday by the most widely known "trance" and platform test medium on the Pacific Coast was shown him. He did not believe it possible, but took a copy of the names and tests and attended the meeting and heard them given by the celebrated medium, Mrs. J. J. Whitney, who prefaced her work by stating that she was "entranced and wholly unconscious" while giving the tests; while all the time she was giving names and messages procured by myself and other confederates and memorized by her for the occasion. Dr. Ravlin was astounded, and declared he would expose such hypocrisy upon the platform; that it was an insult to the angel world. I told him to keep cool and not go to war without proper ammunition. He went with me to the home of Mr. Frank Thwait's, and together, Mr. Ravlin and Mr. Thwait's prepared some "tests" for the same medium for the next Sunday. Some of these were remarkable, and created a sensation when given. One of Mr. Thwait's especially, stating that he was born in Calcutta, India, and that his wife was at that time in Chicago, Ill., will be remembered by many who were present. I also told him of some tests I was going to give Mrs. Maud Freitag, and he heard her give them from the platform. I have a letter from Mr. Ravlin recently written to a lady in this city in which he refers to the matter.

Mr. Ravlin and myself also prepared some more tests for Mrs. Whitney which were given from the platform in Scottish Hall, Larkin street, San Francisco, last September during the State Convention of Spiritualists. This satisfied Mr. Ravlin, and he remarked that he had "been barking up the wrong tree for twelve years," and was now in grave doubt as to the genuineness of any of the so-called spiritual phenomena. I also enlightened the gentleman as to my own methods and those associated with me in the "Spiritual and Psychic Institute" in producing slate writing and materialization. I gave him a slate writing, telling him beforehand that it was a simple trick and yet when the sitting was over he declared that the slates never left his hands for one moment and yet they were filled with writing. I asked him if he was sure the slates did not leave his hands, and he said he was positive they did not, and that he was willing to so testify. And he did. Here is a copy of his affidavit.

San Francisco—State of California.

Aug 18, 1897.

This is to certify that I had a sitting for slate writing on said date with Bishop S. Garrison. We held closed slates, without a table, which were perfectly clean and not for one moment did they pass out of my hands or sight. In less than five minutes both slates were filled with writing. The demonstrations of "Psychic power" was in my opinion above any possibility of fraud,

N. F. RAVLIN.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 28th day of August A. D. 1897.

JUSTIN GATES,

Notary Public

In and for the City and County of San Francisco, State of California.

But he was mistaken, and I afterwards showed him how he had been deceived. He declared it the most valuable lesson of his life as it demonstrated that even the senses could be deceived and were not to be relied upon in the investigation of psychic phenomena. I took him into my circles and illustrated what suggestion would do in the line of clairvoyance and clair-audience. It was only necessary for me to say that some spirit was trying to control a member of the circle, when instantly some medium, or sensitive would verify my statement as describe the spirit, while the person referred to invariably corroborate both statements by manifesting an abnormal condition. It was a common occurrence for several person to be "controlled" at the same time and declare they saw scenes and objects suggested by myself by way of experimentation.

#### THE EVILS OF MEDIUMSHIP.

While the practice of fraudulent mediumship is greatly to be deplored as a swindle, and making people believe a lie, still, the evil does not rest there. It is deep, widespread and devastating in its effects upon the moral and social conditions of society. It conduces to the enthrallment of reason by clouding the intellect with vagaries, mysticisms and superstitious beliefs. Most mediumship has degenerated into a species of fortune telling which has ruined and bankrupted men and women all over the land who have been guided by it in business transactions, and by investing in "lucky lottery tickets," winning horses, stocks, mines and games of chance in general. Where one fortune has been made by following such advice hundreds have squandered their earnings in a fruitless quest. The unprincipled man or woman finds in that kind of medium a convenient ally for "putting up jobs" on innocent people, playing the part of detective for jealous husbands and wives, drawing from confiding women the most sacred confidences while personating dead husbands, fathers, mothers or guides; sometimes carrying the horrible iniquity so far as to assume the most delicate relationships on behalf of the beloved dead. The most serious aspect of the case is that all this fraud and wickedness is protected by law in the name of religion. Many of these swindlers being "ordained ministers of the gospel of Spiritualism" and entitled to all the courtesies accorded clergymen of any religious denomination. Every day the advertisement of these pretenders appear in the daily papers,— "Materializing and etherializing seance tonight," "trumpet and slate writing seance," "Mother Sadie" seance, etc. Any person so advertising is obtaining money under false pretenses by claiming that the dead appear in any of those forms or produce any of the manifestations. If challenged to produce even one physical demonstration of independent spirit agency or power they would not dare accept the challenge, no matter how great the reward offered, for it could not be done under conditions which would preclude the possibility of fraud being practiced by the medium or a confederate. When spiritualists awaken to a realization of the true situation, and honest men and women demand truth and honesty in the mediums as of others there will be a great revolution in spiritualism and a higher standard of platform work. The passing away of the old will leave the new bright, clear and beautiful. Those who seems foes will be found the true friends and the "Waster, the real Builder."

I looked; aside the dust cloud rolled,  
The Waster was the Builder too;  
Upspringing from the ruined old  
I saw the new.  
'Twas but the ruin of the bad,  
The wasting of the wrong and ill;  
What 'ere of good the old time had  
Was living still."

#### NOTICE

As our last issue of the *Liberator* was not sufficient to supply the demand, and many wish a copy of Mr. Garrison's "Experience in Spiritualism" we have reproduced it in this number in order to supply all who wish copies for missionary work and fill orders already in.

"Oh, Reason, in thy searchings find us out, arouse our souls and make us dare to doubt; Teach us to love and only seek the truth, though it may change all lessons taught in youth; Throw off our shackles set our spirits free, and make us dare to think, and learn of thee."

"In thy face I see a map of honor, truth and loyalty." "For by his face straight shall you know his heart." "All men's faces are true, whatsoever their hands are."—*Shakspeare.*

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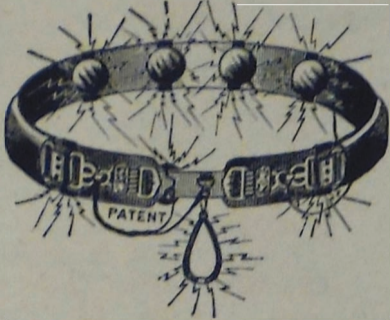
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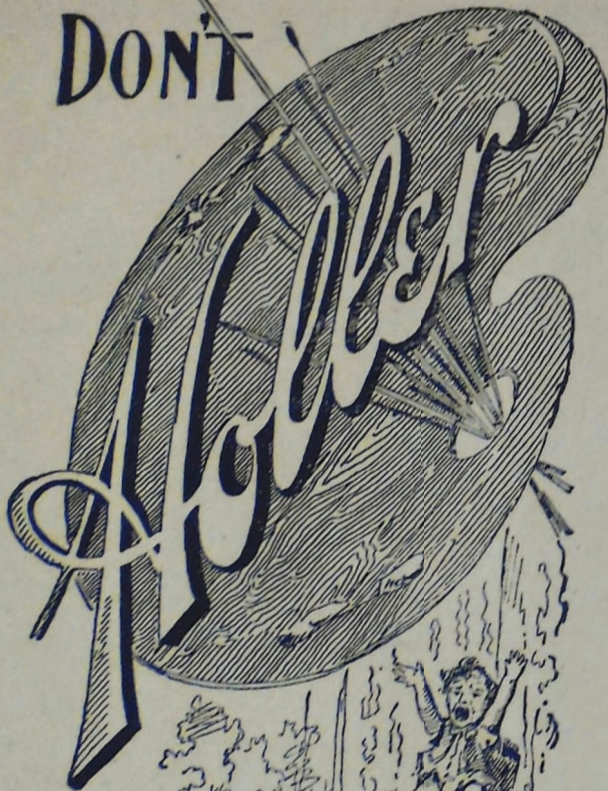
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