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## SPIRITUALISM IN AMERICA.

By BENJAMIN COLEMAN.

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### III.

I AM now about to introduce a story, to which I ask the reader's especial attention, as it is fraught with incidents by far the most wonderful of the kind I have ever seen or heard of, and although I am not permitted to publish the narrator's name, it will be found in the sequel that I am able to corroborate the statements made to me in the most satisfactory manner, and indeed, in a way little short of my own personal testimony.

I must, in the first instance, introduce the English reader to the name of Dr. John F. Gray. He is a gentleman enjoying a prominent position in society, a scholar, highly respected by the community in which he resides, and though he has been an unflinching and open advocate of Spiritualism for several years, he has, I am told, the largest practice of any physician in New York.

Weekly conferences are held in New York and Boston, which are attended by many of the leading Spiritualists in those cities. Questions are proposed and discussed, and all the best information pertaining to the spread of Spiritualism is imparted at these meetings. I attended one of them, held at Clinton Hall, New York, and Dr. Gray read on that occasion the following highly interesting and very extraordinary account of manifestations of a wife to her husband, through the mediumship of Miss Kate Fox, being a continuation of similar experiences witnessed on previous evenings by a gentleman, who is a personal and intimate friend of Dr. Gray's. After some remarks on the precautions taken to assure himself against the possibility of deception from any quarter, Dr. Gray's friend proceeds thus to describe a *séance* :—

"The lights being extinguished, footsteps were heard as of persons walking in their stocking-feet, accompanied by the rustling sound of a silk dress. It was then rapped out by the alphabet—'My dear, I am here in form; do not speak.' A

globular light rose up from the floor behind me, and as it became brighter a face, surmounted by a crown, was distinctly seen by the medium and myself. Next, the head appeared, as if covered with a white veil: this was withdrawn after the figure had risen some feet higher, and *I recognised unmistakeably the full head and face of my wife*, surrounded by a semi-circle of light about 18 inches in diameter. The recognition was complete, derived alike from the features and her natural expression. The globe of light was then raised, and a female hand held before it was distinctly visible. Each of these manifestations was repeated several times, as if to leave no doubt in our minds. Now the figure, coming lower down and turning its head, displayed falling over the globe of light, *long flowing hair*, which even in its shade of colour, appeared like the natural tresses of my wife, and like hers was unusually luxuriant. This whole mass of hair was whisked in our faces many times, conveying the same sensations as if it had been *actually human natural hair*. This also was frequently repeated, and the hair shown to us in a variety of ways. The light and the rustling sound then passed round the table and approached me, and what seemed to the touch a skirt of muslin was thrown over my head, and a hand was felt as if holding it there. A whisper was now heard, and the words, 'Sing, sing,' were audibly pronounced. I hummed an air, and asked—'Do you like that?' 'Yes, yes,' was plainly spoken in a whisper, and in both cases I recognised distinctly the voice of my wife, to which I had become sensitively familiarised during her last illness, when she had become too weak to talk aloud. An arm was passed round my neck, and I asked her to kiss me. The light immediately approached me, and a form like a face touched me sensibly twice on the left side of my mouth. A head then reclined on mine, the long hair falling over my face and shoulder, and remained until the heat became unbearable. A bright light then appeared, and disclosed a figure with the arm raised over its head. I asked for an explanation of the nature of the drapery, and it was answered by the raps:—'It is a spiritual garment naturalised; I will bring you the key.' Foot-steps and the rustling indicated a movement towards the door, and the sofa which was against the key was removed, the key turned in the lock, and was then placed in my outstretched hand.

"The manner of making the raps was also shown by another spirit, thus:—a luminous ball about the size of my hand, with a blunt point attached to it, about three inches above the table, answered our questions by striking against it," &c., &c.

At another sitting a few days after, the same precautions and conditions being observed, the following phenomena were witnessed:—

"The table was lifted from the floor, the door violently shaken, the window-sash raised and shut several times, and in fact, everything moveable in the room seemed in motion.

"Questions were replied to by loud knocks on the door, on the window, ceiling, table, everywhere; all being the work of several powerful spirits, who were present, and whose presence was necessary, as it was afterwards explained, to support or induce the manifestations of a more beautiful and interesting character.

"An illuminated substance like gauze rose from the floor behind us, accompanied by a heavy rustling sound like a silk dress. The previously described electrical rattle became very loud and vigorous. The figure of a female passed round the table, and, approaching us, touched me. The gauzy substance was shaped as though covering a human head, and seemed as if drawn down tight at the neck. Upon close examination as it approached near me a second time it changed its form, and now seemed in folds over a melon-shaped oblong, concave on one side, and in this cavity there appeared an intensified brilliant light. By raps I was requested to look beyond the light. I looked as directed, and saw the appearance of a human eye. Again receding with the rattle, the light became still brighter, and then re-approaching, the gauze which had changed in form was grasped by a naturally-formed female hand, and unfolding, revealed to me, with a thrill of indescribable happiness, *the upper half of the face of my wife*, the eyes, forehead, and expression in perfection. The moment the emotion of recognition had passed into my mind it was acknowledged by a succession of quick raps. The figure disappeared and re-appeared several times, the recognition becoming each time more nearly perfect, with an expression of calm and beautiful serenity. I asked her to kiss me if she could, and, to my great astonishment and delight, an arm was placed around my neck, and a real palpable kiss was implanted on my lips, through something like fine muslin. A head was laid upon mine, the hair falling luxuriantly down my face. The kiss was frequently repeated, and was audible in every part of the room. The light then moved to a point about midway between us and the wall, which was distant about ten feet. The rattling increased in vigour, and the light, gradually illuminating that side of the room, brought out in perfection an entire female figure facing the wall, and holding the light in her outstretched hand, shaking it at intervals, as the light grew dim. My name and her name were repeated in a loud whisper, and among other things which occurred during this remarkable sitting, the figure at the close stood before *the mirror, and was reflected therein.*"

The incidents of another evening were thus described:—"The

lights and electrical rattle were as strong as on the previous occasions. Hands were placed upon my forehead, a head placed upon mine, the hair, as before, falling down my face into my hand. I grasped it, and found it positively and unmistakably human hair; it was afterwards whisked playfully at me, creating as much wind as an ordinary fan. The spiritual robe was then dropped over my head and face, as real and material in substance as cotton or muslin of a very fine texture. At one time, the globe of light extended to about two feet in diameter. At last, it was shaken with another sharp rattle, and shining brightly, revealed again the full head and face of my wife, every feature in perfection, but spiritualised in shadowy beauty such as no imagination can conceive, or pen describe. In her hair, just above the left temple, was a single white rose, the hair being arranged with great care. The next appearance, after a brief interval, revealed the same face, with a pink rose instead of a white one. The whole head and face were shown to us, at least twenty times during the sitting, and each time was recognized by me, the perfection of the recognition being in proportion to the brilliancy of the light. During the whole of these manifestations cards of a large size, provided by myself, were placed on the floor with a pencil, and long messages were found to have been written upon them." &c., &c.

Dr. Gray, in conclusion, said—"These manifestations could not have been produced by human means, and if you admit the competency of the witness, of which, from my knowledge of him, I have no doubt, they are, in my opinion, conclusive evidence of spirit identity." Several persons in the assembly rose to ask questions of Dr. Gray, respecting this very startling narrative; and one gentleman said he really could not, though a believer in Spiritualism, receive such statements without great misgivings of delusion being mixed up with them. "Now, he said, "I put it to you, Dr. Gray—Do you believe that such things can and did occur?" Dr. Gray replied, very calmly, "Yes, my friend; I believe as implicitly, every word of those narratives, as I do in my own existence." I then made some remarks, observing "that, wonderful as the phenomena witnessed by Dr. Gray's friend must be admitted to be, I was prepared, from my own experiences, to receive them on fair testimony. The only thing to be regretted was, that manifestations so marvellous should have been witnessed by only one person beside the medium, and that that one should withhold his name from the world." &c., &c.

I have had occasion to remark, when writing on this subject before, that no one can have any idea of the number of persons who have more or less knowledge of spiritual facts, until he shall have openly proclaimed his own belief in them, as I have done.

The confidence of finding sympathy and respect for an extraordinary statement, instead of sneers and derision, brings out men and women from all ranks of society, among whom are many we should least expect to be so "weak," or so "deluded," and who have each to tell of some mysterious occurrence, or well-attested ghost-story. To the readiness, therefore, with which I ever received testimony from serious people, I owe the advantage of having collected many curious facts, which men of more sceptical tendencies could never obtain; and it is to the few remarks I made on Dr. Gray's paper, I have now the advantage of introducing the foregoing narrative to my readers, and more of the same character which follows, which I do with as much confidence as if I had myself witnessed the wonderful phenomena therein spoken of. At the close of the meeting, a serious and gentlemanly person, of about five-and-thirty, dressed in deep mourning, who had been seated at my side, presented his card, and said he should be glad to make my acquaintance. "I am," he said, "the friend of Dr. Gray, and it is I to whom these manifestations have occurred. You appear to understand the subject, and I shall be glad to satisfy you of the facts. I knew nothing whatever of Spiritualism eight weeks ago, and had been, up to that time, most disconsolate. Dr. Gray, is an old friend. He attended my wife during her illness, and it was at his request that I called on Miss Fox. The result has been a complete and most happy change in the state of my feelings. No one could be more sceptical than I was. With the exception of my sister and Miss E., who resides with us, I do not speak to any one on the subject, knowing that none of my friends are prepared to receive such statements, and that I should be, in all probability, treated by them as I should previously have treated others, that my experiences would be set down to delusion, or aberration of intellect; and situated as I am in business, I am not disposed to risk, at present, the consequences of publishing my name to the world."

All this I could of course appreciate, although, it is certainly much to be regretted that such marvellous and deeply interesting facts should not have the advantage of being at once openly attested by the witness of them; who, in this instance, would be a most valuable one, as this gentleman is the head of a highly respectable commercial firm in the city of New York, who is well known to, and in correspondence with, the American banking-house of Messrs. Peabody and Co., of London. However, I am bound to respect his wishes in this particular, and my readers must therefore, for the present, be content to know him by the initial L., and his wife by the Christian name of Estelle. I have given to my friends, Mr. and Mrs. Howitt, Mr. and Mrs.

Wilkinson, Dr. Ashburner, and others, most ample evidence that this is not a tale of fiction, and I shall not object to show to any serious inquirer the evidence in my possession. With Mr. L. I became better acquainted. He invited me to his residence, where I saw two very fine portraits of his wife, painted in Europe, and she appears to have been a very lovely young woman. Mr. L. also read to me the diary he had kept of the evenings he had spent with Miss Fox, which contained some curious particulars not mentioned in Dr. Gray's paper, and I was especially interested with the numerous cards in his possession, on which were written long notes addressed in the most loving and natural terms of endearment, and which are *fac-similes*, as shown me by comparison with his wife's own hand-writing: some of the cards are written upon on both sides, and it must be understood that the writing was obtained by the card and pencil being laid upon the floor, and came *direct from the spirit-hand*, and not through the medium, or any other human agency. I have one of these cards in my possession, and will, if the editors think it desirable, have it lithographed for the magazine. I have exact copies of several others, and as it will, no doubt, interest the reader to know the style of composition of these "loving-letters," I give the following as a specimen, and it is one of the shortest:—"My darling—little did I think when I was departing that I should have a blessing like this. Had I *then* the knowledge that I have now, the grave would have lost its gloom. There is no separation—no death! and what is so beautiful to me, is the fact of angels being the watchers of their loved on earth. My darling, I look forward with joy to the time when I shall be permitted to raise the veil which clouds your vision, and talk *with* you face to face. The time is near; be happy; meet me to-morrow night, and be free from fatigue. God bless you; love to my father; when can I meet him?—Yours in heaven.—ESTELLE."

On the day before I left New York I received the following letter from L.:—

"My dear Sir,—I enclose herewith two cards, *fac-similes*, as nearly as I can write them, of those you have seen. The division of words and sentences and the underscoring is precisely the same as in the original. They were written for me by spirit-hands in the presence of Miss Fox. I have had as many as six of these cards written upon both sides at one sitting, and most of my communications have been written in this way.

"My first experience was in February last. I have never sat with any medium except Miss Catherine Fox, and up to the time I first saw her I was not only a thorough sceptic, but had taken no interest in the subject. The accounts of the extraordinary manifestations published by Dr. Gray were written by me

at his request in order to avoid any exaggerations which might creep into a verbal narrative. You may rely upon the facts as being exact in every particular, the same having been witnessed by Miss Fox, both of us being in a normal condition. Each manifestation was promised by the spirits, and the time appointed beforehand in their own handwriting on cards. You are quite at liberty to state the facts related by me to you, but for reasons which you understand I beg you will withhold my name. Wishing you a pleasant voyage and safe return to your friends,—I am, &c.

“B. Coleman, Esq.”

“L.”

Previous to my leaving New York I made a special visit to Miss Fox to inquire from her as to the facts and character of these manifestations. She fully corroborated all Mr L. had told me; and said that, with one exception, these appearances far transcended anything of the kind she had ever witnessed through her own or any other mediumship. She appeared as much surprised at the results as Mr. L., and was, she said, much more nervous when witnessing them. Whilst at Boston I received another letter from Mr. L., from which I make the following extracts:—

“April 30, 1861.—I enclose herewith a *fac-simile* of another remarkable card, written for me last night, which I have no doubt you will be glad to have. I called at the St. Nicholas a few minutes after you had left, and regret that I missed seeing you, as I should have liked to have shown you the original. It is so near an approach to perfection in its execution—not a word misplaced, &c. Another card was written at the same time, purporting to come from Dr. Hull, a valued friend of mine, and brother-in-law of Dr. Gray. Thus far every promise has been literally fulfilled. One only has not been as perfectly accomplished as I expected, namely, that of conversing in familiar tones on the part of my wife. If any further remarkable development occurs, I shall send an account of them to you,” &c.

The card enclosed was neatly written on both sides, and in the following terms:—“My darling—We have much to contend with, but we must be patient and abide God’s time, which will, I know, be soon. When there is anxiety in your mind, it is almost impossible to come near you, and therefore I pray be not too wishful or too anxious. I have been with you to-day, and the past was vividly recalled when returning home to the room where I had passed so many happy hours. Even my last moments were made precious, a peace surpassing all earthly power entered my soul while I waited for the bridegroom to come. God bless you, darling; bless you when you rise in the morning, and bless you when you rest at night. Thine shall be a happy future. Flowers are blooming in heaven for me, and I

am with the pure and holy. Live a pure life.—ESTELLE.  
When can I meet my dear father? Love to him.—ESTELLE.”

I can imagine nothing more real than the earnest, affectionate tone of these letters; the anxious desire to be remembered by her father, to whom, I was told, she was especially attached, is a peculiar feature of these communications. Believing that I cannot relate anything which will interest the reader more than Mr. L.’s experiences, though I have yet in store something of a different character quite as marvellous, witnessed by myself, I shall continue the narrative, and give the reader the information which has reached me since my return to England in letters I have received from Mr. L., and which, as will be seen, contain an account of some further most astounding manifestations and suggested theories which will, no doubt, interest the scientific student of spiritual philosophy.

“ New York, May 20, 1861.

“ My dear Sir—In compliance with your request to be informed of any further experience which I might have, I beg to say that it has continued with such interesting and varied developments that it is impossible for me, at this time to enter into anything like detail. We have now arrived at that point where cards are written, with the date prefixed. The first of this kind, headed ‘Friday, May 3rd, 1861,’ was most carefully and correctly written, and the identity of my wife’s handwriting proved conclusively by minute comparison. You have seen the cards of an earlier date, and hence it is unnecessary for me to speak further of them, except to say that the spirit, style, and handwriting are positive proofs to my mind of the identity of the writer, if the other more convincing proofs still, which I have had, were left entirely out of the question.

“ A portion of one of my last was as follows:—‘ We have in preparation for you, greater manifestations, greater developments than you have yet witnessed; do not forbear to give them to the world. You must benefit others by your experience.’ I was requested, soon after you left, to procure drawing paper and material for ‘a picture.’ Three sheets of paper, about two feet square, and three large crayons were brought and placed upon the table in front of Miss Fox and myself. Each sheet was privately marked by me, the room carefully closed, and all made secure. The light being turned down, a selection was made by the spirits of one of the sheets of paper; the other two were handed to me with the signal that they should be laid aside. The crayons were asked for, and handed to the spirits by me, for, perhaps, half an hour, we heard them as though being used in drawing. At the end of that time, they were again handed me, and the paper commenced floating about the room, occasionally



touching our heads. Cards were called for, and written upon as usual. The two crayons were also again called for, and taken from my hand. A light was now struck, and upon looking for the picture, *neither it nor the two large crayons could be found.* Upon reading the cards, they explained as follows:—‘We have concealed the picture and crayons in the atmosphere of the medium.’ Notwithstanding the most careful search, I could not find either paper or pencils.

“Two evenings afterwards I went to Miss Fox, and that there should be no mistake, I at once suggested going into another room upstairs. I then locked the door, carefully examined every nook and corner, and Miss Fox’s pockets as well, and am *positive* that neither the paper nor pencils were in the room. Upon sitting down and turning out the light, a pair of scissors was called for, and placed by me upon the table. In about fifteen minutes a spirit-form stood by me, tapping me lovingly upon the shoulder. *The two crayons were dropped one by one on the table from over my head, and the rattling of the paper indicated that it also was in the spirit’s hand.* The scissors were now taken, and rapped out a communication by my side upon the table, and commenced cutting vigorously the thick drawing paper, replying to my questions when asked, and going on again immediately, cutting as before. Nearly half-an-hour was thus employed, when the fragments were dropped upon our heads and hands, and at last the picture was placed in my hand.

“Upon getting a light, we discerned a very pretty sketch of a spirit, with the veil and rose in the hair, precisely similar to the appearance as described to you of my wife. This was about five inches square. The remainder of the paper was cut into grotesque shapes and forms very ingeniously done, many small hearts, &c., &c., which I have retained to show to any of my friends. I have since had a beautiful large picture done in colours, representing the removal of my wife’s spirit from the earth, supported by angels, with others above strewing flowers in their path. I shall probably write you again, but hope, in the meantime, to receive the Magazine. Please not to mention my name, as I am not yet ready for publicity.

“Very truly yours,  
“L.”

“B. Coleman, Esq., London.

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“New York, June 24th, 1861.

“My dear Sir,—I beg to acknowledge receipt of your esteemed favour of 4th instant, and shall at all times be happy to hear from you.

“The very short time, during which my investigations in spiritual phenomena have been made do not, perhaps, permit me to speak authoritatively, yet the developments have been to me so

wonderful, that I should feel recreant to my sense of duty were I to hide them under a bushel.

"You are, no doubt, correct in saying that anonymous statements carry less weight than when attested by a respectable signature. In my case, however, the credibility of the witness can be proved, first by your own testimony, as well as again by that of Dr. Gray, to whom I am well and intimately known. And here permit me to say, that I regard Dr. Gray's opinions on spiritual science as entitled to, perhaps greater weight than those of almost any prominent spiritualist in this country. He has an eminently practical mind, with great analytical comprehensive power, and is not likely to be unduly influenced by imaginative minds. He is strongly opposed to what he considers the too great prevailing confidence in spiritual identities. Dr. Gray fully understands the practical nature of my investigation. How I have receded step by step, from a state of thorough scepticism, and therefore he attaches importance to facts *so important*, which he knows are free from exaggeration. My earnest desire was, above all, not to be deceived myself, and now that my faith is impregnable, I wish to keep it pure by a strict adherence to positive truth. From the first I have kept a record, including the states of the atmosphere, direction of the wind, &c. My experiences and observations prove that the electric conditions, both of the atmosphere and of the persons receiving manifestations, are, if possible, more important and subtle than mental conditions. I find that a perfect manifestation can only be received under a combination of favourable conditions—mental, physical, and atmospheric. A north wind and clear sky are both desirable, but the greatest electric phenomena (of lights) witnessed by me was during a snow storm, when the atmosphere had become highly electrical by the action of the falling particles of moisture suddenly congealed by an extraordinary change of temperature to intense cold. Our atmosphere, you are aware, is ordinarily dry, while yours is surcharged with moisture; and I am satisfied it would for that reason be difficult, if not impossible, to obtain as perfect manifestations in London as in New York. As Miss Fox says, she has never received such powerful ones with any other person it would, perhaps, be proper for me to state that my condition has always been highly electrical. The combing of my hair elicits electrical sparks in profusion in dry weather,\* and I find no

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\* A similar statement is made by the Rev. C. H. Townshend, in his *Facts in Mesmerism*; the passage appears to us so interesting and suggestive in this connexion that we here transcribe it. [*Ed.*]

He says:—"I am of an electric temperament, so much so, that long ago, when a child, I used to amaze and even alarm my young companions by combing my hair before them in the dark and exhibiting to them the electric coruscations. Of course, also, this phenomenon takes place most remarkably in a dry, and

difficulty in lighting gas, by applying the end of my finger to the burner, after having excited the electricity in my system by friction of my feet upon the carpet. This, however, is a not an uncommon occurrence here, although I have repeatedly tried it in England without success. I give you these facts, because I think it important to look at all the means, by which spirits are probably enabled to produce their wonderful phenomena without transcending the laws of nature.

"You ask if I believe all the manifestations are from one spirit. Most certainly not—for it has been repeatedly explained, and I think proved, that the spirit made itself visible to me through the powerful aid of other spirits. The startling noises, I believe, were made by others for the purpose of exciting the nervous system, and throwing off from the body of the medium and myself the electric fluid, which are then seized upon and made available by the will of the active spirit. This is my theory gathered entirely from observation.

"On the occasion of the first appearance, I was told that the spirit of Benjamin Franklin had aided in producing the electrical phenomena by means of which the spirit was made visible. From that time he has invariably announced himself. His identity it has been impossible for me to prove, except upon his own affirmation confirmed by that of my wife. But *her* identity has been established beyond the shadow of a doubt. First, by her appearance; second, by her hand writing, and third, by her mental individuality, to say nothing of the numerous other tests, which are conclusive in ordinary cases, but upon none of which have I relied, except as corroborative evidence.

"The weather has of late been so warm and unfavourable, that no further efforts have been made at crayon drawings, beyond perfecting the one which I named to you. It is a representation of the departure from earth of the spirit of my wife, borne upon the shoulders of four angels, while others above are scattering garlands of flowers. I send you enclosed memorandum of an evening, when drawing paper, crayons, &c. disappeared and re-appeared in face of a most scrutinising search. *The facts are beyond any question*; and the explanation given by the spirits, is as follows:—'The paper, &c. was concealed in the atmosphere of the medium, dissolved in the air, and spiritualised by being in our presence.' The appearance of my wife has taken place

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therefore, non-conducting atmosphere. Now between this electrical endowment and whatever mesmeric properties I may possess, there is a perfect relationship and parallelism. Whatever state of the atmosphere tends to carry off electricity from the body hinders in so far my capacity of mesmerising; and whatever state of the atmosphere tends to accumulate and insulate electricity in the body, promotes greatly the power and facility with which I influence others mesmerically."

several times since you left, and I am now promised the appearance of another person; an account of which, should it take place as promised, I will send you. But it is not likely to occur until the fall, as during the very hot weather, Miss Fox will be absent from the city, as well as myself, and the manifestations are not as successful in such a temperature. She and her mother, after considerable deliberation, concluded not to undertake the journey to England, and have given it up, at all events for the present. I have had many wonderful experiences since seeing you, but nothing particularly new. It is not uncommon now for the spirit of my wife to come in form, and spell out messages upon my shoulder, with repeated kisses and tokens of love so palpable that I could not if I would avoid realising her presence. The writing continues and has become as perfect as her handwriting in life. I enclose a card, as requested by you. I do not wish to part with it, and shall, therefore, feel obliged if you will return it after keeping it as long as you wish. It may be difficult for me to send you a specimen of her handwriting, as most of her notes and letters contain private matter, which I would not wish to have made public. I will, however, before closing this search for something, which can be sent without violating (what I consider sacred) her private thoughts and feelings. I send this card because it is a test. I had been that day at Greenwood Cemetery with my sister and Miss E——, and while looking at some flowers planted upon my wife's grave my attention was called by Miss E—— to some little birds which flew across (after stopping an instant) to an adjoining copse of trees. I thought no more of the birds until they were mentioned as you will notice in the card. I have also lately received several cards written in French. My wife was an excellent French scholar and both wrote and spoke the language, while Miss Fox does neither. Should I have further drawings in the Autumn, I shall be very glad to send you a specimen; but you are of course aware that they are not done with the same care and facility as those of Mrs. French, which seem almost like photography."

"*June 25th.*—I had written thus far, not supposing I should have any new manifestations of interest during the warm weather, but last night the wind having suddenly changed to the north-west with an unusually clear, cool and pure air, I went to see Miss Fox, and received the most wonderful manifestation it has ever been my lot to witness. My wife appeared to us in such glittering transcendent beauty and perfection, as no human mind can conceive of; and I have been completely overpowered and overwhelmed at the recollection of that glimpse of heaven. Do not, I beg of you, think me a demented enthusiast—for such I am not. Miss Fox is in raptures at what she conceives to have

been the most stupendous and wonderful of anything she has ever dreamed or thought of.

"I was requested to write a series of questions upon a card, numbering each. This I did, keeping them entirely private. No living person but myself knew what these questions were, and I did not take them from my pocket until the light was turned out. Yet the blank card was returned with every question answered perfectly, with numbers corresponding. Benjamin Franklin purports to have answered them; and on another card gave me a brief account of his life and purposes, written in his peculiar style, terse and expressive.

"I shall from time to time write you of any further developments. I expect them. I feel great confidence that I shall not be disappointed, as my spiritual promises have all been kept. I will make enquiries respecting spiritual telegraphy soon. I have received but three back numbers of the Magazine. You will excuse the hasty imperfect style of my communications, as they are necessarily written without care, from my want of time.

"With kind regards, I am sincerely yours,  
"L."

The card enclosed in this letter is three inches long, and two inches wide, containing, *on one side only*, the following interesting message, written in a very neat small hand, and exactly like the natural handwriting of which a specimen for comparison was also sent by Mr. L.:—

"Heaven bless you, my dear Charley. In all your earthly walks I glide by your side. Dear Charley, did you not notice as you were standing over the grave that now holds the remains of one you knew so well, that even the little birds seemed conscious of the event? They seemed to fly so noiselessly, winging their way to less sacred groves. Oh! how I tried to awaken you then from your musings and transport you from the past to the present. Oh! dear Charley, it gives me so much happiness to talk with you, to write to you, to manifest to you in every way. You are in no dream, dear Charley. Let no dream of unbelief enter your heart.

"Anguish may drown the swelling hymn, may check the voice of love, but faith shall burn more brightly.

"But now, dear Charley, I must go. The harps of heaven have already sounded. The invisible choirs have commenced the song 'Hallelujah' to our Father and our King! There is rejoicing in our angelic hosts, rejoicing in the happy choir, for a new seraph has joined our glittering files. Good night.—ESTELLE."

"June 13th, 1861.—The object of this meeting was to finish a picture, previously commenced upon a sheet of drawing paper,

about two feet square. This was unrolled and spread upon the table, placing a book upon one corner, and a box, containing twenty-four coloured crayons upon the other. The door of the room had been locked, and the key placed in my pocket, and both of the medium's hands were held in mine. Soon, the box of crayons was rubbed against my hands, various loud raps, &c., were made upon the table, during which the paper was noiselessly taken from its position. Cards were called for, and a written explanation returned as follows:—"My darling, I have taken the picture to perfect it—you shall have it to-morrow, finished." Upon turning up the gas, the paper and box of crayons had both disappeared. I made a most careful examination of the room, no police detective could have done it more thoroughly; and I am as positive as I can be of anything that neither of the articles were in the room. The medium did not leave the table; both her hands were held by me, and there was no person but ourselves in the house."

"*Friday, June 14th, 1861.*—On this occasion, I determined to make thorough work of my examination of the room, &c. After locking the doors and taking the key, I locked the drawers of the bureau, and examined every corner and crevice, as well as the medium's pocket, and having satisfied myself that neither the picture nor the crayons were in the room, I tied the medium's hands, took them in mine, and put out the light. At the end of half an hour, the rustling of spirit-robcs was heard. I turned my head in the direction of the sound, when a hand was placed upon each side of my head, turning it back to its former position. The rustling indicated an approach to the table, at my left (the medium being on my right), and gentle raps, as though made by the knuckle, were made, the box of crayons was shaken, and its contents turned upon the table. The paper was now heard as though in a roll: it was unrolled, and placed against my face. Holding the medium with one hand, with the other I took the paper and laid it upon the table, while raps upon my shoulder spelled out as follows:—"Be careful with the picture—I wish you to have it copied." The spirit was now distinctly heard to walk to the other side of the table, to open and shut the drawer after making an examination of its contents, apparently, and repeating the operation. For nearly an hour, the spirit was in form by my side, during which I was kissed audibly, probably twenty times. During this time, at intervals, startling manifestations were taking place. The heavy sofa was lifted up and down; the marble-topped bureau was pounded violently upon by a daguerreotype case, by chance lying there, and a bunch of keys was shaken about our ears. An effort was made to speak, which was so far successful as to call me by name, audibly, several times; but the medium, at this

became so nervous that it could not be continued. A card was written upon, in explanation of the former one, as follows:—  
 ‘The new seraph, darling, was one not known to you—Daily and hourly we are called upon to minister to the sick and dying—It is our duty—ESTELLE.’ Upon getting a light, the picture was found completed, and the identical one which had disappeared. I had put a private mark upon each, and from the extraordinary examinations and care which I took, I am positive that the disappearance and re-appearance have been entirely without human agency.”

“*Monday, June 24th, 1861.*—Locked the doors, placed the key in my pocket and made everything secure. Sat in quiet, and was told not to ask questions. Then by raps—‘There will be no failure to-night—I will come to you first—ESTELLE.’ Soon, a bright light followed a rustling sound, and appeared near our shoulders, between us. The medium became nervous, when I requested it to come to my left. This was immediately replied to, by three raps upon my left shoulder, and a corresponding movement of the light to that side. Hands were placed upon either shoulder, turning me a little to the right, then upon my head, pushing it down till my forehead was near the table. Three taps upon my head indicated that the position was satisfactory, and I remained passive. The intention was, evidently, to prevent my too earnest gaze. Vigorous rustling was heard, and the light, now very vivid, rose to a height of about three feet above the table (at the side). It was so bright as to illuminate surrounding objects, and as it approached, there seemed a heavy dark substance before it. Reaching a point, about two feet from my eyes, the dark shadow was lowered, revealing beauty, such as God only, in his infinite goodness and power, could permit those in the flesh to behold. A glimpse of heaven it was, and of an angel, as bright as ever stood before his throne:—the spirit of my wife, a white rose in her hair over the left temple, and her loving eyes smiling inexpressible blessings. She appeared in this manner six or seven times. The perfection of the appearance was such that every feature, lineament and expression was as complete as a full blaze of light upon a face could make it. A roll or veil surrounded her head, leaving a clear space of about a foot or eighteen inches between it and the hair, and this veil glittered like silver gauze. The whole scene was transcendently beautiful, beyond the power of description. About fifteen minutes afterwards, the light appeared in a corner, illuminating the centre of the room, and a female figure in full proportions stood before us, back towards us, with a veil depending from the head to the feet, of silver gauze, which glittered and shone almost like diamonds when the light struck upon it. I asked if she would raise her arm above her head, and my request was immediately complied with.

No pen can describe the exquisite beauty of what was revealed this night to us. If heaven is half as bright or beautiful, death should have no terrors. This appearance was very much more vivid than any previous manifestation, and each one seems more nearly perfect."

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Mrs. Kennison, of whom I have spoken, is herself an "impressionable" medium, by which is understood that she is impressed by spirits, and forced, in her natural state, to act upon her impressions. One spirit in particular, she informed me, used to come frequently and impel her to carry out his anxious desires for the welfare of his former clients. This was the spirit of Robert Rantoul, of Washington, a well-known lawyer. She took messages for him as directed to many persons whom she did not know, and they invariably understood them; for instance, she said, "A short time since I was told by Rantoul to go to Mr. Bassett, a merchant in Boston, and warn him, that if he did not give immediate attention to a particular debt due to him of 5,000 dollars he would lose it. As I did not know Mr. Bassett, and it was not convenient for me to go to Boston, I did not at first attend to the request. But Rantoul came again, and again, until at length I was obliged to comply with his wishes. I made inquiries for, and found Mr. Bassett. I explained to him, as well as I could, the nature of my errand. He seemed at once to understand it, and said his attention had been called to the transaction that very morning, and that he had taken the necessary steps for his protection. I then said, Rantoul also told me to say to you, 'For God's sake to give up the law-suit.' And this, too, Mr. Bassett said he perfectly understood."

Some days after my interview with Mrs. Kennison I met when travelling a Captain Jonathan Hallett, of Quincy. Our conversation turning to the subject of Spiritualism, I found he was a believer, and strangely enough he incidentally mentioned Mrs. Kennison, and confirmed the statement she had made to me of the special character of her mediumship. Captain Hallett said, "I had been for a little time looking into the subject, having up to this period no belief in a future life, and I had attended a meeting of Spiritualists; on coming away a lady, who was an entire stranger to me, addressed me, and said, 'I do not know who you are, sir, but during the evening I was impressed to give you this message from the spirit of your mother;' and the lady, who proved to be a Mrs. Kennison, gave me this paper, which I preserve, as from this incident I date my complete conversion from infidelity." The paper, which he took from his pocket-book, and which I read, congratulates him on the light which is dawning, and exhorts him to follow it, "in the



blessed hope of a brighter future for my dear son," &c. Captain Hallett then went on to say, that as he pursued his inquiries his faith became strengthened from many sources. He found that two very remarkable mediums lived immediate neighbours to him. One was the daughter of his friend Mr. Southworth, a girl of 15, named Sarah. The other was a professional man, who had not announced his name to the public, and therefore he did not wish to mention it; but, he said, it is a common occurrence for him to be carried about by the spirits, and he had assured him that he prescribes for his patients with great success entirely by spirit dictation. Captain Hallett then gave me a very curious and interesting history of the manifestations he had received through Sarah Southworth. "Sixteen years ago," he said, "I lost my brother Charles, to whom I was much attached, by the wreck of his ship. I went to claim his body, and I expressed aloud my surprise to find it looking so fresh and life-like. One of the first messages written to me through Sarah's hand purported to be from this brother, of whom I am certain she had never heard. Captain Hallett gave me the message to read and copy. It runs thus—"Dear Johnnie—I have at last the satisfaction of controlling this medium by the kindness of one of her spirit guardians, and now that the way is open before me, I have so many things to say, that I scarcely know where to begin. I am glad, dear brother, that you have opened the doors of your heart, and invited the spirits to enter. Many spirits, I find, are unhappy, because their friends do not receive them. I think if the unbelieving ones only knew this, they would reflect a moment ere they let them suffer thus," &c., &c. The letter then goes on to speak of various subjects, and an allusion is made to the circumstance of his going to claim the body, repeating the exact words he, Captain Hallett, said he had used on that occasion, and adding, "I then stood by your side, Johnnie, and was surprised that you did not recognise me." The message is written quite sailor-fashion, full of seafaring phrases, and it completely satisfied Captain Hallett of the identity of his brother's spirit.

After the lapse of some months, Captain Hallett got another written message through Sarah Southworth, which I think is worth transcribing in full, and it is as follows:—

"Dear Brother Johnnie—I have, at last, got the control of this medium again, though she is pretty much used up; but I guess I can steer her into a safe harbour after I get through, although I ain't much used to this kind of rigging. I have many friends that I would like to speak to, but they are so much wrapped up in the mists of orthodoxy, that I can scarcely see them. If I could get a chance I should talk plain, for the

doctrines they believe can no more nourish the soul, than paving stones can the human body. Oh, the inconsistency of mankind! They shut themselves up in their houses, bolt the doors, and bar the windows, and then call upon God to reveal himself. There is a mighty change sweeping through the earth, Johnnie. It speaks in thunder tones, and startles the priest at his altar—the king on his throne. The blade is now drawn, and the banner unrolled, for the struggle between the old and the new; and though the sea may roll mountains, it cannot prevail against this mighty spirit. Humanity has wrangled over musty creeds too long; but when the light of the present and past are combined, a glorious day will dawn upon the world. Man has been an animal long enough—be men and women now. Angels have come to earth for a purpose—let it not be thwarted. Communications now come, and the world heeds them; and in time, they shall give place to a grand, noble, inspiring religion, where God shall be worshipped in spirit and in truth. These rappings broke the shell of selfishness, and man is free; and when he is once free, and has plumed his wings and soared away on the breeze of liberty, he cannot return, and, hugging his wings close to his side, enter the old shell again. He may put his head in, but his heart will be outside. It is by the power of will that man communes with man. Spirits send out their thoughts upon this magnetic ether, and very few are insulated from this power. Inspiration comes not in words, but in ideas, and flows in mighty currents through the human mind. Many upon earth, in coming time, will recognise the good seed that has been sown, and taken root, which will yield an abundant harvest. Hell fire and damnation have done their work: so long as the human heart remained cold as an iceberg, such a fire could be tolerated; but now it is being warmed with the fire of love, and so the fire of brimstone is failing, and those Divine teachers who for eighteen hundred years have been endeavouring to teach the Good Father the error of *His* ways—that it is His duty to damn nine-tenths of His children, and divide heaven among the few that be saved—will, no doubt, take a sea voyage for the benefit of their health, and to enlighten the heathen a little further away from home. I heard a minister say the other day that he thought God ought to send a rain of fire and brimstone on the earth, it was so wicked. But I dare say he would like to be perched up somewhere out of harm's way. I knew at once what sort of man he was, by his ideas of our Heavenly Father. But why is it that the world is not better, when Christianity has been the ruling power for eighteen hundred years? If the world is so wicked, it is certainly time that God sent his spirit-messengers to redeem it. I have been wanting to write to

you sometime, Johnnie. I don't make much head-way though—Mum's the word. Sister Lucy's playmate Sarah is here, and will write to her soon. I will steer this craft into port now, so good-bye, Johnnie—from your spirit brother—CHARLEY."

"Mum's the word" is an allusion to the Doctor, through whose mediumship it appears the spirit occasionally manifested to his brother.

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## CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALISM IN THE MEDIÆVAL AGES.

By MRS. H. B. STOWE.

To the mind of the really spiritual Christian of those ages, the air of this lower world was not a blank empty space from which all spiritual sympathy and life have fled; but, like the atmosphere with which Raphael has surrounded the Sistine Madonna, it was full of sympathizing faces—a great "cloud of witnesses." The holy dead were not gone from earth; the Church visible and invisible were in close, loving, and constant sympathy, still loving, praying, and watching together, though with a veil between.

It was at first with no idolatrous intention that the prayers of the holy dead were invoked in acts of worship. Their prayers were asked simply because they were felt to be as really present with their former friends and as truly sympathetic as if no veil of silence had fallen between. In time this simple belief had its intemperate and idolatrous exaggerations; the Italian soil always seeming to have a volcanic forcing power, by which religious ideas overblossomed themselves, and grew wild and ragged with too much enthusiasm; and, as so often happens with friends on earth, these too-much loved and revered invisible friends became eclipsing screens instead of transmitting mediums of God's light to the soul.

Yet we can see in the hymns of Savonarola, who perfectly represented the attitude of the highest Christian of those times, how fervent might be the love and veneration of departed saints without lapsing into idolatry, and with what an atmosphere of warmth and glory the true belief of the unity of the Church, visible and invisible, could inspire an elevated soul amid the discouragements of an unbelieving and gainsaying world.—*Agnes of Sorrento.*

## THE MORNING STAR ON "MODERN SPIRITUALISM."

THE periodical which is now before us (*Spiritual Magazine*) is the organ of a decidedly unpopular cause. "Spiritual Manifestations," as they are termed, are regarded by the majority with incredulity; by some they are denounced as the fruits of deliberate imposture. On the other hand, a very large body of believers not only allege that they continually occur under given conditions, but also hold that they are to be ascribed to the operation of a purely spiritual agency. In the investigation of the subject these two points may be conveniently kept apart. The genuineness of the phenomena must be established before any necessity can arise for endeavouring to assign to them a cause. We are quite aware that there are many who will treat with contempt the suggestion that the matter is worthy of serious inquiry. The human mind has an unhappy tendency to ridicule all that it cannot comprehend. The egotism which sets up its own finite comprehension as the test of possibility rejects with scorn everything alien to its experience or antagonistic to its preconceived ideas. It can scarcely be necessary to urge that such a mode of dealing with alleged facts is not only grossly unphilosophical, but would, if generally adopted, prove a positive barrier to the elucidation of important truths. As the world has grown in age new wonders have been constantly crowding into view—so marvellous as to excite incredulity on their first discovery, but now become so familiar through habit as to awaken no surprise. Candid and impartial research can alone distinguish realities from illusions, and discriminate between genuine phenomena and the effects of fraud. Of course, a marvel apparently irreconcilable with known natural laws, and vouched for only by a single individual, is not to be held entitled to such serious treatment. But when a very large number of independent and respectable witnesses testify that they have repeatedly seen phenomena wonderful in their character, identical in their nature, and occurring always under certain fixed conditions, it is obviously our duty to sift their evidence, in order that we may either crush an imposture, dispel a delusion, or establish a new and possibly most important truth.

This is the position which the controversy with regard to Spiritualism has unquestionably assumed. In England and in America thousands of men and women esteemed for their piety, their intellectual ability, and their social worth, aver that they have been eye-witnesses, not once but repeatedly, of very strange manifestations, which can scarcely be accounted for by the operation of any known natural agency. They tell us that they have

seen heavy tables lifted up a foot or more from the ground and held for some moments suspended in the air; men raised from their chairs and floated across the ceiling of the apartment; accordions and guitars, held in the hand, played upon by unseen fingers; bells carried about a room and rung at intervals by an invisible power, and passed from hand to hand of the quiescent circle; intelligible sentences written upon slates and slips of paper placed beyond the reach of any present; luminous hands appearing in the air, lifting articles from the floor and placing them upon the table; and a host of other marvels to all appearances equally beyond the grasp of ordinary credibility. These things are said to have been witnessed, not by one individual at a time, but by a dozen or more, all of whom aver that they saw the same things at the same moment. They are alleged to have taken place rarely in the dark, occasionally in semi-obscurity, but in the greater number of instances in fully lighted rooms. Other phases of the manifestations are reported of a different but equally striking character. The present number of the *Spiritual Magazine* contains the second of a very interesting series of papers on "Spiritualism in America," by Mr. Benjamin Coleman, which embodies some eminently curious details. In the United States, the belief in Spiritualism has taken root very deeply—its adherents are numbered by hundreds of thousands, and a large number of periodicals exist devoted specially to its advocacy. If the statements of Mr. Coleman are to be believed—and he is a gentleman whose word would be unhesitatingly taken on any ordinary matter—the phenomena are there developed even more remarkably than elsewhere. He tells us, for example, of a drawing medium, who has the power of sketching perfect portraits of deceased persons whom he never saw, and with regard to whose personal appearances he had no means of forming any idea. He relates his visit to another medium, to whom he was personally unknown, who, in answer to his mental question, wrote a communication to him from his step-son, sometime deceased, signing it with the young man's full name, and adding his own residence in London; and he states that he listened to some speaking mediums, persons in their ordinary state wholly illiterate, who, under what was asserted to be spiritual influence, spoke in public for more than an hour at a time with very remarkable eloquence and intellectual power. He recounts an instance, which he declares was certified to him on excellent authority, in which a communication was received through a medium leading to the discovery of a lost document essential to the success of an important law suit; and he recites an example of an opinion obtained by the same means which brought to light a new point, and put a stop to a harassing litigation. But putting aside all

that he gives on the authority of others, his narrative of his own personal experience is strange enough to satiate the most ravenous appetite for the marvellous. At one *séance*, for example, at Boston, he states that a guitar was carried rapidly about the room above the heads of those present, a melody being accurately played upon it as it moved through the air—that bells were similarly floated about, ringing all the while—that the medium, in her arm chair, was lifted on to the centre of the table, from which position he himself removed her—that his own name was pronounced in a loud voice through a horn—and that, when he complained of the heat of the room, a fan was taken from a drawer and waved before him, and a tumbler of water was raised and placed to his lips.

All this is no doubt passing strange, and those who have never with their own eyes seen anything of the sort may be well excused for shaking their heads in doubt. It is true that the striking singularity of some of the phenomena reported induces us sometimes to forget that, if we concede the possibility of one of them, we may without much difficulty admit that of all. Grant that a power exists which can raise a heavy table from the ground and hold it suspended in the air, it is clear that the same agency may just as easily lift a man from his chair, carry a bell, wave a fan, or play upon a guitar. The simple rapping upon the table, if not fraudulently produced, is intrinsically, though not apparently, quite as marvellous as any of the most elaborate manifestations. But these physical effects are by far the least interesting of those which the Spiritualists allege to be of every-day occurrence in their circles. They complain, indeed, that the use of the phrases "Spirit Rapping" and "Table Turning" has tended to give the general public a very low and inadequate idea of the scope and object of this class of phenomena. According to their doctrine, these strange freaks which are played with material objects are designed solely to arrest attention, and to convince the sceptical that unseen agencies are present capable of holding communion with mortals; and that, this end having been attained, the real purpose of that which they regard as a beneficent dispensation acquires its needful scope and comes into full play. This purpose they hold to be the communication from departed beings to their surviving relatives of messages of solace, of warning, of encouragement, and of counsel—conveyed occasionally by audible voices, but much more frequently in an alphabetic form. They appear to believe—and we are of course merely stating their theory, without expressing any opinion as to its claims to adoption—that the ultimate end of these "Spiritual Manifestations" is the advancement towards moral and religious perfection of the living through the loving ministrations of the dead—the proximate end being the counteraction of materialistic tendencies by the exhibi-

tion of cogent proofs of the reality of spiritual existence. Mr. Coleman's paper contains a few of the messages thus sent, and a host of examples of them are found cited in other publications. It is only fair to say that they are uniformly admirable in tone, and pervaded by genuine piety and sound morality. The literary merit of certain communications which have been dictated in the United States, purporting to come from eminent intellectual celebrities of past times, is certainly infinitesimal. But it is nevertheless true that credible witnesses assert that these were spelt out in their presence, as they stand, by raps given at the various letters as the alphabet was called over, and their evidence to this is the only point with which, in the present stage of the inquiry, we have to deal.

If the extraordinary narratives, of which we have thus summarised a few of the most salient points, were vouched for only by men utterly unknown, or of dubious credibility, they might scarcely be deemed worthy of serious attention. Even then we could scarcely avoid the reflection that the idea which constitutes the postulate of the Spiritualists, so far from being novel, has had adherents in every age and every nation. The belief in the possibility of intercourse between spirits and mortals has found a place in almost every religious creed ever held by man, and pagan traditions and biblical records alike bear witness to supernatural communion. Nor can we entirely exclude the thought that these phenomena, if sufficiently attested to be accepted as real, would cast much light on many incidents in past secular history which stand greatly in need of some rational elucidation, in place of the wholesale rejection of a mass of evidence which has hitherto been our desperate expedient. But are they so attested? This is the first point to be settled. The principal witnesses are literary men of note, merchants, lawyers, physicians, and divines; ministers of divers sects, men and women of unblemished repute, artists, poets, and statesmen. Of minor witnesses the name is legion, but we have no personal knowledge of their claims to our belief. This much we know, that in America and in our own country there are many whose sanity no one doubts, whose general veracity no one would impeach, who aver that they have seen these strange things with their own eyes. It remains for us to say whether we will take their word.

If we stamp all those who declare that they have witnessed these so-called "Spiritual Manifestations" as liars, of course the inquiry will be at an end. If, on the other hand, we are willing to believe that, in the narratives which they have given us, they have honestly recorded the impressions produced upon their eyes and ears, we shall next have to consider to what causes these phenomena may fairly be ascribed. Four hypotheses have been

put forward: fraud, self-delusion, the operation of some hitherto undiscovered natural law, and spiritual agency. The idea of fraud, as a general explanation of the manifestations, may, we think, be fairly discarded. Imposture there may have been in cases where money was to be gained; but seeing that many of the most striking manifestations testified to took place in private houses, where no paid medium was present—this being especially true of the intellectual communications purporting to come from departed relatives—it is difficult to believe that those who formed the circle could have been fools enough to practise a deliberate cheat upon themselves for no object whatever, to say nothing of the blasphemy against the holiest affections which was involved in simulating a message from a deceased parent, wife, or child. It is not easy to understand what invisible mechanism would take a man out of his chair, float him round the ceiling, and then replace him in his seat; and that must be a very knowing apparatus for the production of raps which would spell out to an unknown foreigner the name of his step-son, who had been some years in the grave. But in purely private circles—the vast majority of those which are held—fraud is clearly out of the question. If self-delusion be the chosen explanation, then we ought to have it explained how it happens that the same delusion operates upon a dozen or more persons at the same time; or, to take a stronger case, how Mr. Coleman and his companions all fancied that they saw the medium in her arm-chair placed upon the table, and he imagined he lifted her off, while they only thought they saw him do it. If the operation of an unknown natural law be the solution adopted, it must be one law capable of producing all the phenomena recorded, for they appear to present themselves in very indiscriminate order at various *séances*. It is a current, but very grave error, to suppose that the most startling of these physical manifestations are opposed to known natural laws. It is generally said, for example, that the lifting of a table from the ground—one of the commonest of the alleged phenomena—is opposed to the laws of gravitation. Clearly it is not, if an unseen force be applied to it, powerful enough to counteract its attraction. An unseen force is no novelty in nature. Life is unseen—electricity is unseen—heat is unseen, until, by igniting matter it gives birth to flame. But this force must be one, capable of accounting for all the effects. It will not do to say that this phenomenon results from hysteria, that from magnetism, the other from thought-reading, a fourth from the od force, whatever that may be. If the spiritual theory be resorted to, a vital point arises. Is it a good or an evil agency? The advocates of the Satanic theory have this great stumbling-block to get over, that the advice given in the messages communicated is said to be universally good, the



sentiments moral, and the doctrine piously Christian; and it can scarcely be supposed that the Author of Evil would labour for his own discomfiture. There may be a mixture of good and evil agencies; then we ought to discover how we are to discriminate between the two. For ourselves, we express no opinion on the subject; all we wish is to see the matter fairly investigated, with a total absence of that spirit of ridicule which is always offensive and proves nothing, and which is in the present case especially out of place. With the consideration of "*Cui bono*" we have nothing whatever to do. The first question to be solved is, "Is it true, or is it not?" The second, "Whence is it?" If the first be answered in the affirmative, then, even should the second remain without reply, we may tranquilly leave the rest to the good providence of God.—*Morning Star and Dial*, August 5th.

[We are happy to find that our pleasant labours have called forth so clear and candid a statement of the question as the foregoing; the most fair and satisfactory that has yet appeared in the newspaper press of this country. We trust that many others of our contemporaries will soon show an equal openness to learn, and an equal impartiality of statement. It will be their own disgrace if they do not profit by so good an example. The *Morning Star and Dial* has also, with commendable liberality, opened its columns (a second time) to the discussion of the subject, and several letters *pro* and *con* have appeared. We trust that every fresh discussion may be conducted with increasing wisdom, and that all who write on Spiritualism will first take the trouble to make themselves thoroughly acquainted with it. We desire that the physical phenomena should receive the fullest investigation, but, at the same time, that the discussion should by no means be limited to these, for they are not even essential to Spiritualism, but are merely the outcrop on the surface indicating the action of an inner life and of more central forces. We would respectfully suggest to all who may take part in this or any future controversy of the kind, that it would probably be more instructive to consider the question in that larger spirit we have endeavoured to indicate in the words adopted as the motto of our Magazine.—*Ed.*]

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#### THE DEAD.

Oh, hearts that never cease to yearn!  
 Oh, brimming tears that no'er are dried!  
 The dead, though they depart, return,  
 As if they had not died!

The living are the only dead;  
 The dead live—never more to die;  
 And often when we mourn them fled,  
 They never were so nigh!

## A LAY SERMON ON THE SUPERNATURAL CHARACTER OF CHRISTIANITY.

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"I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation."

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THE mere profession of Christianity, now, is attended with no discredit; it is respectable; often it is politic and worldly wise. Yet we know that as long as the world is unreclaimed, so long as it is out of harmony with its Maker and Redeemer, there must be a certain amount of reproach connected with a pure, consistent, unfaltering attachment to so utterly unworldly a thing as Christianity. Therefore, if the outward profession of Christian faith is so popular as to involve no self-denial, it becomes us to ask, what is the form in which the reproach of the cross presents itself to us? It comes to each age in different forms; it wears a different aspect for different classes of society; it appeals in special ways to all grades of culture and refinement. How does it reach us? Let us pause awhile before we answer this question, and take a glance at one feature of the age in which we live.

If there is one characteristic of modern thought which we are more inclined to boast of than another, it is its scientific character. We live in a scientific age. Eager eyes all around us are looking with fixed, resolute, penetrating glance into all departments of nature, and reading the laws that, as open secrets, are written there. Science extends its boundaries every day. It is constantly putting its interpretations upon facts which were supposed to be outside its sphere—beyond its range. There is a deep, and earnest, and commendable faith in a God of order and harmony at the heart of all this scientific earnestness. It is this faith, as a spiritual axiom, which lies at the bottom of all enthusiasm for science. Scientific men, perhaps, call the axiom by a different name—they may even profess to exclude faith in God from the recognized axioms of science altogether; but because they do injustice to themselves, that is no reason why we should do injustice to them. No; we will reverently acknowledge this faith as the real basis on which all true devotion to science rests, whether it is so regarded by scientific men or not. The tendency, then, of modern thought is to bring all events into the embrace of natural science—to reduce all life, all experience, all facts under the dominion of fixed and unchangeable laws.

We do not complain of this, so long as science keeps to its own domain. Christianity approves of all the lawful work of science; but its very existence rests upon the fact that nature,

and merely natural order and laws, do not contain all that enters into experience. There is a supernatural element in life, in which the fixed successions and unalterable sequences of natural causation do not exist. Science has yet to recognize this. When she does, she will discover a new sphere for her activity; for there is a science of the supernatural, as well as a science of the natural, and this region of scientific thought is yet almost unknown, and quite unexplored, although it is the region to which all the most precious and sacred experiences of human life must be referred. Christianity, once and for ever, gives to this supernatural element in life its due place of rule and authority. It started with miracles—not in order to astonish us, not to prove its Divine authority, not to establish any doctrine which otherwise could never reach the heart of man—but in order to raise man above the plane of nature, and put a supernatural element into existence. Christ never pretended that these wonders were peculiar to one age of the world; he did not even assert, what we might perhaps have expected, that his own miracles were of so stupendous and exalted a character as to be exceptional—never to be matched or surpassed. Doubtless there is a quality in Christ's miracles which makes them unique and unapproachable; but Christ himself carefully explains that that special and peculiar quality does not consist in their mightiness, their startling external wonderfulness. On the contrary, he says, "greater than these shall ye do, because I go to my Father;" thereby intimating that his power was under restraint, and that the full scope of the mighty realm of the supernatural to which he had introduced his disciples could not be fully realized till he had ascended to the skies. There seems, then, to be no reason, either in the nature of things, or in the words of the New Testament, why we should expect "mighty works" to be restricted to one age of the world, but very much the reverse. But whether this be the case or no, certain it is that Christianity proclaims spiritual gifts as the inheritance of man, and leads us to expect a constant, abiding spirit of power to dwell with us and within us. Life is to be no longer merely natural and ordinary, shut out from all the powers that exist beyond the region of our sensible perception. We have a right to look for such an interior force in our being as shall sway our natural forces, and give a perpetual Divine quality to our consciousness.

Now, here is our vulnerable point. We are all apt to be so brow-beaten by the overbearing autocracy of natural science as to shrink from the most distant avowal of sympathy with this feature of Christianity. Scientific men have looked at nature, and nature only, with such a fixed, undeviating stare, that they have become biologized by it, and can only see what nature

shows them, only hear what nature tells them, only believe what nature allows them to believe. They have no vision for the supernatural, and they prescribe their own limitations for others. They condemn any attempt to report of wonders outside mere nature, and those who dare to believe in supernatural experiences are supposed to have lost their hold on reality, and to have surrendered themselves to every mad delusion that can visit a disordered mind. Reality means with them those things which happen according to fixed laws; consequently, the supernatural becomes equivalent to the unreal.

Thus it arises that we have been awed and abashed by natural science, and by the incurable scepticism of scientific men when they deal with matters outside their own domain—a scepticism which has even invaded our churches and flavoured our theology. We are afraid, for instance, to acknowledge a special, minute, particular, providential oversight, guiding us in all the details of life; planning our existence for us; leading us by ways we know not; providing for contingencies we had not anticipated; averting dangers we had not perceived, or could not have escaped; opening up new sources of help, new sources even of bodily sustenance, when our necessities increase or our powers fail; steering us through embarrassments, which appear as if they must crush and overwhelm us; putting suggestions into our minds, and words into our lips exactly when they are wanted; fortifying our faith when it is threatened; giving us an inward certainty, which is proof against all assaults; confirming and justifying our trust in God, by assuring us of his constant presence and nearness; interpreting the words and facts of Scripture; revealing Christ; clothing his words and works and doctrines with new attractions; investing our common duties with unexpected and profound meanings; raising the secular into the plane of the spiritual and sacred; putting freshness and fervour and breadth and richness into our prayers; making us feel that the thinnest possible veil separates us from vastly more wondrous experiences than we have ever yet realised; making the terrors of death appear absolutely and completely unreal,—not more formidable than the passage over a river into the next country; in short, giving us a new and wonderful life, and communicating a supernatural interest to all we think and do and are. We are afraid to appropriate as our own this rich mine of Christian wealth. And although every one of us, looking back in serious contemplation on the past, must be startled into amazement, and awed into worship by seeing how strangely the finger of God has been at work in even the most trivial details of life, still we remain blind to the fact as an abiding possession, we are afraid to take its sweet comfort home to us every hour. We are

cowed into timidity and reserve because we see awaiting us the charge of fanaticism or madness; and so we prefer to shut ourselves up within our four square walls, immured in nature, imprisoned by our own external sensations, "cribbed, cabined and confined," in spiritual darkness and poverty, in languor and weariness; chafing and fretting against our limitations, pining in solitude, when we might receive into co-operation and companionship God and his Christ and all the hosts of heaven, and fill our expanded being with inexhaustible freshness and strength. And what is this but to be ashamed of Him, who, when he ascended into the heavens, "led captivity captive;" released us from our captivity to the impressions of sight and sense, our captivity to mere nature, our captivity to the common places of ordinary experience? What is this but to be false to Him who "gave gifts for men"—gifts for body, soul and spirit; gifts for the individual; gifts for society; gifts for nature; gifts supernatural; and who gave these "that the Lord God might dwell among men," no longer as a distant, unknown dignitary, but in human form; in closest, sweetest, holiest intimacy; nearer than wife or child, dearer than parent and friend; loved with a personal rapture, which is now the rarest of all experiences, because the supernatural nearness of the heavenly friend is so little believed.

Meanwhile, as the supernatural has dropped out of our Christianity, Christianity itself ceases to be real to us, and we are ashamed of it. We falter in our defence of it. We are not half so proud of it as of our English birth and blood. It is not half so substantial or necessary to us as a carpet for our drawing rooms, or a summer excursion to the sea-side. We cannot distinctly trace its influence in our education, and in the development of our character. It seems to have had less to do in forming us than Latin or Greek, or any study we have pursued. It looks like a faded tradition of the past, not a fresh living fact of to-day. For it has never opened heaven to us; never clad us in the sacred mystical consciousness of acting under Divine inspiration. It leaves us as it finds us, of the earth, earthy; common place beings; sunk in nature; duped by the pompous shows and empty vanities of a heartless pleasure-seeking world; poor, mean, miserable, deaf, blind and naked.

Perhaps some one will say these representations are exaggerated; that we have portrayed the new life which Christianity offers in mistaken colours. Very well! Make what deductions you please; correct or modify the outline as you desire. *We* have no deductions to make. Would to God we could place these considerations before your mind, and our own in infinitely clearer light and more vivid colours. But after all, your deductions admit at least that we have some reason for being ashamed

of as much of the Gospel of Christ as we can at present see embodied in human life and character. If this is all that Christ has to offer, the doubt may sometimes arise whether we could not dispense with the Gospel altogether—or at any rate, whether it might not have come in less costly form, and with more moderate pretensions. If there is an element of scepticism in this thought, let our indignant recoil provoke a righteous anger against ourselves, that our profession of Christianity has been so poor and ineffective as to afford to the sceptical suggestion even a show of plausibility. And at any rate, let us not suppose that any conception we can form of what the Gospel is to do for us, and our race can be too exalted. We may be mistaken; we may expect false things; we may hope for that which God has not promised. But if so, depend upon it we err not on the side of excess, but of defect. We do not expect too much, but too little. For our expectations are based on that which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. And he that believeth—believeth eagerly, passionately, as longing to see the salvation of Christ—believeth intensely, fully, hungrily, in a power deeper than the depths of hell, broader than the waste places of humanity, lasting as eternity, immutable and steadfast as the throne of God—he that believeth in the Gospel of Christ cannot, if he would, be ashamed of it. He must, with all the force and fervour of his renovated nature, with all the music of his spirit, join in the swelling chorus of the heavenly hosts, and sing before God and man and angels. “Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, goodwill to man.”

R. M. T.

#### A REMARKABLE TEST OF SPIRIT PAINTING.

From the *Banner of Light*, June 8th.

“In the *Banner of Light*, of February 2nd, I read a communication in regard to spirit painting, by J. B. Fayette, Esq., of Oswego, N. Y. Being very anxious to get the portrait of my spirit mother, and having had a communication from her to the effect that she would sit for Mr. F. on the 25th of February, I simply wrote to Mr. F., stating that I wished to have the portrait of my spirit mother, and that she would sit for him on the day above named. Some three weeks ago I received a letter from Mr. Fayette, stating that he received, on the day appointed, the portrait of a lady, giving a description of it. I immediately sent for, and have it now in my possession. My surprise can be imagined, when, on opening the box, I recognized in it a true portrait of my spirit mother—true and perfect in every particular.

“Now the most remarkable feature is this: My mother was born in Germany, and died there about eleven years ago. Her portrait was never taken in her lifetime, and her attire was entirely different from any fashion in this country. Mr. Fayette knew nothing of all this. To my astonishment and delight, the painting exhibits not only the true and perfect likeness of my mother, but even the particular fashion of her dress, and the very one that she used to wear before her last sickness.

“Any one who wishes, can see it at any time by calling at my residence.

“CHRISTIAN FISCHBACH.

“St. Louis, Mo., April, 1861.”

## THE OLD COUPLE HOMEWARD BOUND.

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It stands in a sunny meadow,  
The house so mossy and brown,  
With its cumbrous old stone chimneys,  
And the grey roof sloping down.

The trees fold their green arms around it,  
The trees a century old ;  
And the winds go chanting through them,  
And the sunbeams drop their gold.

The cowslips spring in the marshes,  
And the roses bloom on the hill ;  
And beside the brook in the pastures  
The herds go feeding at will.

The children have gone and left them—  
They sit in the sun alone !  
And the old wife's ears are failing  
As she harks to the well-known tone

That won her heart in her girlhood,  
That has soothed her in many a care,  
And praises her now for the brightness  
Her old face used to wear.

She thinks again of her bridal—  
How, dressed in her robe of white,  
She stood by her gay young lover  
In the morning's rosy light.

Oh, the morning is rosy as ever,  
But the rose from her cheek is fled ;  
And the sunshine still is golden,  
But it falls on a silvered head.

And the girlhood dreams, once vanished,  
Come back in her winter time,  
Till her feeble pulses tremble  
With the thrill of spring-tide's prime.

And looking forth from the window,  
She thinks how the trees have grown,  
Since, clad in her bridal whiteness,  
She crossed the old door stone.

Though dimmed her eye's bright azure,  
And dimmed her hair's young gold;  
The love in her girlhood plighted  
Has never grown dim nor old.

They sat in peace in the sunshine,  
Till the day was almost done;  
And then, at its close an angel  
Stole over the threshold stone.

He folded their hands together—  
He touched their eyelids with balm;  
And their last breath floated upward,  
Like the close of a solemn psalm.

Like a bridal pair they traversed  
The unseen, mystical road,  
That leads to the beautiful city,  
“ Whose builder and maker is God.”

Perhaps in that miracle country  
They will give her lost youth back;  
And the flowers of a vanished spring-time,  
Will bloom in the spirit's track.

One draught from the living waters  
Shall call back his manhood's prime;  
And eternal years shall measure  
The love that outlived time.

But the shapes that they left behind them,  
The wrinkles and silver hair,  
Made holy to us by the kisses  
The angel had printed there,

We will hide away 'neath the willows,  
When the day is low in the west;  
Where the sunbeams cannot find them,  
Nor the winds disturb their rest.

And we'll suffer no tell-tale tombstone,  
With its age and date, to rise  
O'er the two who are old no longer,  
In the Father's House in the skies.

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SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OF NATURE IN  
CLAIRVOYANCE.

By A. J. DAVIS.

WHEN I seated myself in a chair, facing the operator, I observed a few individuals in the room; but had not at the time the least idea of having anything resembling a successful experiment performed upon me. I knew then but very little of human *magnetism*, having simply heard the term used a few times, but had not learned of the wonderful phenomena of clairvoyance, or second sight, and hence did not entertain the remotest conception of such a psychological condition. Nevertheless, the magnetic state was completely induced in thirty minutes; and my mind, for the time being, was incapable of controlling the slightest muscle of the body, or of realizing any definite sensation, except a kind of waving fluctuation between what seemed to me to be either decided *action* or *inertia*. This was a very strange feeling, but not at all unpleasant. In a few minutes, all this mental commotion subsided; and I then passed into the most delightful state of interior tranquillity possible to describe. Not a discordant sensation rolled across my spirit. I was completely "born again," being in the spirit. My thoughts were of the most peaceful character. My whole nature was expanded. I thought of the joys of friendship—of the unutterable pleasures of universal love—of the sweetness and happiness of united souls; and yet, I experienced no unusual emotion—no increased pulsations of life, which one might suppose would be a natural consequence of these pleasurable themes of thought upon the mind.

Now, notwithstanding my mind was meditating in this manner, I perceived as yet not the least ray of light in any direction; and therefore, concluded that I was but lost physically in "a deep sleep," and that my mind was simply engaged in a peaceful reverie. But this conclusion had no sooner settled among my thoughts as a strong probability, than I instantly perceived an intense blackness before me, apparently extending hundreds of miles into space, and enveloping the earth. Gradually, however, this midnight mass of darkness disappeared; and, as gradually, my perception of things was enlarged. Our room, together with the individuals in it, were all illuminated. Each human body was glowing with many colours, more or less brilliant. The figure of each individual was enveloped in a *light* atmosphere, which emanated from it. The same emanation extended up the arms, and over the entire body. The *nails* had

one sphere of light surrounding them; the *hair* another; the *ears* another; and the *eyes* still another. The *head* was very luminous; the emanations spreading out into the air from four inches to as many feet.

The utter strangeness or novelty of this view overwhelmed my mind with astonishment and admiration. I could not comprehend it. I could not feel perfectly certain that I was living on earth. It seemed that earth, with all its inhabitants, had been suddenly translated into something like an Elysium. I knew then of no language which could describe my perceptions; hence, I did not attempt the slightest exclamation or utterance, but continued to observe with a feeling of unutterable joy and reverence.

In a few moments more, I not only beheld the *exteriors* of the individuals in that room clothed with light, as they were, but I also as easily saw *their interiors*, and hence the hidden sources of those luminous emanations. In my natural or ordinary state, I had never seen the organs of the human viscera; but now I could see all the gastric functions,—and the liver, the spleen, heart, lungs, brain, with the greatest possible ease. The whole body was transparent as a sheet of glass! It was invested with a strange, spiritual beauty. It looked illuminated as a city. Every separate organ had several *centres* of light, enveloped by a general sphere peculiar to itself. I did not see the physical organ only, but its *form*, *aspect* and *colour*, by observing the peculiar emanations surrounding it. I saw *the heart* as one general combination of living colours, interspersed with *special* points of illumination. The auricles and ventricles, together with their orifices, gave out distinct *flames* of light; and the pericardium was as *a garment of magnetic life*, surrounding and protecting the heart in the performance of its functions. The pulmonary department was illuminated with beautiful flames, but of different magnitude and colour. The various air chambers seemed like so many chemical laboratories. The fire in them wrought instantaneous chemical *changes* in the blood, which flowed through the contiguous membranes; and the great sympathetic nerve, whose roots extend throughout the lower viscera, and whose topmost branches are lost in the superior *strata* of the sensorium, appeared like a column of life, interwoven and super-blended with a silvery fire!

The brain was likewise very luminous with prismatic colours. Every organ of the cerebellum and cerebrum emitted a light peculiar to itself. I could easily discern the *form* and *size* of the organ by the *shape* and *intensity* of its emanations. This view, I well remember, excited in me much admiration; but I was so deeply in the magnetic condition, and was likewise so im-

poverished in language, that I did not openly manifest any delight, nor describe anything which I then beheld. In some portions of the smaller brain, I saw *gray* emanations, and, in other portions, lower shades of this colour in many and various degrees of distinctness; down to a dark and almost black flame. In the higher portions of the larger or superior brain, I saw flames which looked like the breath of diamonds. At first I did not understand the *cause* of these beautiful breathings; but soon I discovered them to be the *thoughts* of the individuals concerning the strange phenomena manifested in my own condition. Still I continued my observations. The superior organs of the cerebrum pulsed with a soft, radiant fire; but it did not look like any fire or flame that I had seen on earth. In truth, the brain seemed like a *crown* of spiritual brightness, decorated with shining cressets and flaming jewels. Each brain seemed different—different in the degrees, modifications, and combinations of the flames and colours; but very beautiful! From the brain I saw the diversified currents of life or fire as they flowed through the system. The bones appeared very dark or brown; the muscles emitted in general a red light; the nerves gave out a soft, golden flame; the venous blood, a dark, purple light; the arterial blood, a bright, livid sheet of fire, which constantly reminded me of the electric phenomena of the clouds. I saw every ligament, tendon, cartilaginous and membranous structure, illuminated with different sheets and magnetic centres of living light, which indicated the presence of the spiritual principle.

Thus I not only saw the real physical structures themselves, but also their *indwelling* essences and elements. And I knew the individuals had garments upon them, because I could see an element of vitality, more or less distinct, in every fibre of clothing upon their persons. And yet, as you would look, by an act of volition, from the blisters in a pane of glass, through it, at the objects and scenes beyond; so I could discern, and that without a conscious effort, the whole mystery and beauty of the human economy, and enjoy the illumination which *the ten thousand flames of the golden candles of life* imparted to every avenue, pillar, chamber, window, and dome of the living temple.

But the sphere of my vision now began to widen. I could see the *life of nature*, living in the atoms of the chairs, tables, &c.; and could see them all with far more satisfaction, as regards their *use, structure, locality*, than I ever remembered to have known in my ordinary state. Then I could perceive the walls of the house. At first they seemed very dark; but soon became brighter and transparent; and presently I could see the walls of the *adjoining* dwelling. These also immediately became light,

and vanished, melting like clouds before my advancing vision. I could now see the objects, furniture and persons in the adjoining house as easily as those in the room where I was situated.

At this moment I heard the voice of the operator. He enquired, "If I could hear him speak plainly." I replied in the affirmative. He then asked concerning my feelings, and "whether I could discern anything." On replying affirmatively, he desired me to convince some persons that were present, by "*reading* the title of a book, *with the lids closed*, behind four or five other books." After tightly securing my bodily eyes with handkerchiefs, he placed the books on a horizontal line with my forehead, and *I saw and read the title* without the slightest hesitation. This test and many experiments of the kind were tried, and repeated; and the demonstration of vision, independent of the physical organs of sense, was clear and unquestionable.

At length, feeling somewhat exhausted, I resigned myself to a *deeper sleep* that seemed to be stealing over my outer form; and, presently, my *former* perceptions returned with greater power. The village was now instantly subjected to my vision. It was as easy for me to see the people moving about their respective houses as in the open thoroughfares, and it was also as easy to see their most *interior* selves as the lights and shades of their physical bodies.

But my perceptions waved on, and the village with its inhabitants melted away.

By a process of *inter-penetration*, I was placed *en rapport* with nature! The *spirit of nature* and *my spirit* had instantly formed—what seemed to me to be—a kind of psychological or sympathetic acquaintance; the foundation of a high and eternal communion. Her spacious cabinet was thrown open to me, and it seemed that I was the sole visitor at nature's fair!

The properties and essences of plants were distinctly visible. Every fibre of the wild flower, or atom of the mountain violet, was radiant with its own peculiar life. The capillary ramifications of the streamlet-mosses,—the fine nerves of the cicuta plant, of the lady's slipper, and flowering vines,—were all laid open to my vision. I saw the living elements and essences flow and play through these simple forms of matter; and, in the same manner, I saw the many and various trees of the forest, fields and hills, all filled with life and vitality of different hues and degrees of refinement. It seemed that I could see *the locality, properties, qualities, uses and essences of every form*, and species of wild vegetation, that had an existence anywhere in the earth's constitution. The living, vivid beauty of this vision I cannot even now describe; although I have since frequently contemplated scenes far more beautiful and ineffable.

But my perceptions still flowed on! The broad surface of the earth, for many hundred miles before the sweep of my vision,—(describing nearly a semi-circle),—became transparent as water. The deep alluvial and diluvial depositions of earth were very easily distinguished from the deeper stratifications of stone and earth, by the comparative and superior brilliancy of the ingredients of the former. Earth gave off one particular colour; stones another; and minerals another. When I first discerned a bed of minerals,—it was a vein of iron ore,—I remember how I started with a sensation of fright. It seemed that the earth was on fire!—for the *instantaneous elimination* of electricity from the entire mass, gave the appearance of a deep-seated furnace in the earth. And my agitation was not lessened by perceiving that these *rivers of mineral fire* ran under the ocean for hundreds of miles, and yet were not diminished in a single flame!

I soon saw innumerable beds of *zinc, copper, silver, limestone, and gold*; and each, like the different organs in the human body, gave off diverse kinds of luminous atmospheres of emanations,—more or less bright and beautiful. Everything had a glory of its own! Crystalline bodies emitted soft, brilliant emanations. The salts in the sea sparkled; sea plants extended their broad arms, filled with *hydrogenous* life; the deep valleys and ravines, through which old ocean flows, were peopled with countless saurian animals,—all permeated and clothed with the spirit of nature: and the sides of *ocean mountains*—far beneath the high pathway of commerce—seemed literally studded with *emeralds, diamonds, gold, silver, pearls, and sparkling gems*.

I now looked abroad upon the fields of dry land; and *saw* the various species of animals which tread the earth. The external anatomy and the internal physiology of the animal kingdom were alike open to my inspection. The idea of *comparative or relative anatomy*, entered my mind in an instant. The philosophy of the vertebrated and invertebrated, the crustaceous and molluscan divisions of the animal world, flowed very pleasantly into my understanding; and I saw the brains, viscera, and the complete *anatomy* of animals that were, at that moment, sleeping, or prowling about, in the forests of the eastern hemisphere, *hundreds and thousands of miles from the room in which I was making these observations!*

It was very beautiful to see everything clothed with an atmosphere! Every grain of salt or sand; every plant, flower, and herb; every tendril of the loftiest trees—their largest and minutest leaves; the mineral and animal forms, existing in the broad fields before me, were each and all clothed with a dark, or brown, or gray, or red, blue, green, yellow, or white

atmosphere,—divided and subdivided into an almost infinite variety of degrees of intensity, brilliancy and refinement. And in each mineral, vegetable and animal, I saw *something* of man! In truth, the whole system of creation seemed to me like the *fragments* of human beings. In the *beaver* I saw *one* faculty of the human mind; in the *fox* another; in the *wolf* another; in the *horse* another; in the *lion* another; and so, throughout the entire mass of the spirally progressive and concentric circles of mineral, vegetable and animal life, I could discern certain relationships to, and indications of man. Had I then possessed the language, I could have truthfully exclaimed, in the words of the *poet-psalmist* :—

Herbs gladly cure our flesh, because that they  
Find their acquaintance there.

\* \* \* \* \*

All things unto our flesh are kind.\*

In my visions, I well remember how I gazed at the little plants in the fields, and saw around each one an atmosphere of life peculiar to itself. This emanation, surrounding some species of vegetation, was apparently from four inches to eight feet in diameter. Some animals gave off a sphere three or four feet thick, and beyond this a very fine thin air—as many feet more, losing itself in the surrounding space. From all this the great *law of sympathy* was very distinctly visible. I saw that everything in nature was arranged and situated in accordance with this great general law; and that by it, all true sympathetic relationships are established and reciprocally maintained. The relative positions of mineral bodies in the bosom of the earth; the situation of trees, vegetation, animals and human beings; yea, the relative positions of the sun and stars even, were manifestly conducted by this universal sympathy. I saw the different crystalline bodies, in the earth, act upon each other, and, intermediately, upon the solid substances to which they were attached by a generous commingling of their magnetic emanations. I saw the flowers exhale their odours, with which they clothed themselves,

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\* [This is very similar to some of the spiritual visions of George Fox, as related by him in his Journal. For instance, he tells us that :—"Now was I come up in spirit through the flaming sword into the paradise of God. All things were new, and all the creation gave another smell unto me than before, beyond what words can utter. . . . The creation was opened to me; and it was showed me how all things had their names given them according to their nature and virtue. I was at a stand in my mind, whether I should practise physic for the good of mankind, seeing the nature and virtues of the creatures were so opened to me by the Lord." And again :—"The Lord showed me that the natures of those things, which were hurtful without, were within, in the hearts and minds of wicked men. The nature of dogs, swine, vipers. . . . I saw within, though people had been looking without." Another seer, Swedenborg, has elaborated this view in his doctrine or science of "Correspondences."—Ed.]

and then formed attachments with neighbouring flowers, by breathing upon them, according to a spontaneous blending of spheres, the sweet breath of their life. There was not a dew-drop, chambered in the petals of the rose, that did not glitter with a living essence,—prophetic of coming animation. I saw currents of electricity flowing from a mineral bed in one portion of the earth, to its kindred, but *positive*, neighbour in another department of that hemisphere. And I saw the little flames arising from the essences of plants and trees, leap upward into the flowing currents, which were instantly absorbed, and wafted away to more proper and foreign destinations.

Language cannot describe this scene. All nature was radiant with countless lights, with atmospheres, colours, breathings and emanations—all, throbbing and pulsating with an interior life-essence that seemed just ready to *graduate*, and leap into the human spiritual constitution! Everything tended to man; apparently, emulated to be man! I could no longer endure the exquisite happiness; I felt incapable of maintaining a quiet feeling; my emotions had become so deep and unutterable! Yet I yearned for association. I then realized that I was viewing all this magnificence, alone! This thought made me feel isolated and incapable of retaining a recollection of all that I had witnessed. I began to think of the village—of the room, in which I had taken a seat for an experiment—of the individuals, whom I had seen in the room, and of the operator. And immediately, my vision began to diminish. The distant continents, oceans, fields, hills, forests—all gradually disappeared. The lights were left behind! Now I could see, as before, the interior condition of those in the room, and the operator; who now spoke to me, and asked, if I had “anything to say.” I made an effort to describe what I have, for the first time, related,—on this occasion. I remembered how I struggled for words, and as I was about to relinquish all attempts to pronounce a word, I exclaimed, in a low, tremulous voice:—“How beautiful!” *I heard my own accents*, and never did I realize a stronger sense of the total *inexpressiveness* and impotence of human language. At that time I said and beheld no more. In a few moments, I felt the hand of the operator passing over my head; and by it was soon awakened to my ordinary state, with not a single idea—of what I had seen—alive in my external memory. Therefore, all that I have just related to you is a revival of the first impressions which were made upon my mind.

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[In the *Great Harmonia*, from which the above account is taken, Mr. Davis tells us that, “This occurred on the evening of the 1st of January, in the year 1844. At that time, and for a

period of four years subsequently, I could not recal to my mind, when *out* of this (the clairvoyant) condition, anything which I had seen or said while *in* it. But now (1852) the vast scenes break upon my memory in all the *vividness* and *beauty*, with which they were originally invested and impressed upon *me*." He adds that "the foregoing account does *not* detail a three-hundredth part of the particulars of my *first* introduction to a spiritual perception of nature. At best I can but give you a rude outline, for words do not answer the purpose; they seem to me like *dark stone prisons*, in which we too often coercively incarcerate our highest thoughts." And he expresses his conviction that, "In the foregoing vision, I saw everything just as *you* all will perceive forms and objects, with the penetrating eyes or senses of the spirit, after you have passed away from the body at the event of physical death." The auras and luminous emanations described by Mr. Davis seem to be in character identical with those detailed by Reichenbach in his *Physico-Physiological Researches*. We hope to give an account of Mr. Davis's remarkable spiritual development and experiences in our next number.—ED.]

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### INSPIRATION.

By A. E. NEWTON, Boston, U.S.A.

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THE word INSPIRATION is from the Latin words *in* and *spiro*, the latter meaning *I breathe*. Its general significance is simply *in-breathing*, or *breathing within*. It is applied alike to the physical process of inhaling atmospheric air for the support of bodily life, and to the mental process of receiving thoughts—or a subtle quickening influence from which thoughts are generated—for the sustentation of mental and spiritual life.

The two processes seem to be entirely analogous or correspondent—the one external, the other internal—and hence the one is illustrated by the other. If so, it follows that as our bodies live in a *physical* atmosphere, the constant in-breathing of which is indispensable to their life and growth, so do our minds and spirits exist in a *mental* and *spiritual* atmosphere, the continued inhalation of which is equally essential to our inner life and expansion. We inspire constantly from the vast realm of thought in which we live and move, the subtle elements from which our feelings and ideas are generated.

It also follows, that as the health and vigour of our bodies depend upon the purity of the air we breathe, so do the soundness and energy of our spirits depend upon the purity of the spiritual atmosphere we inspire. And as the external air we



inhale varies in quality in different *locations*, being purer and more vitalizing in elevated regions, so do mental and spiritual atmospheres differ with the *internal states* in which we are—the loftier realms of aspiration and thought affording us purer and more life-giving inspirations. And again, as the *quantity* of atmospheric air and accompanying vitality inhaled is increased by bodily exercise and exertion, so does the largeness of one's internal inspiration depend in part upon the degree of mental and spiritual *effort* that is put forth. Hence it is that indolent, unaspiring souls, who are content to grovel on the low plains of accustomed thought and personal ease, enjoy so little of spiritual life and freshness of idea, and are prone to doubt the reality of present inspiration. These, as well as they who are willing to breathe the stifling airs and foul miasms of ignorance, selfishness and sensuality, can know little of the higher joys to be found in self-denying activity and earnest aspiration towards the mountain heights of mental and spiritual attainment.

So much of Inspiration as a general or universal fact. It has also some particular or special phases which demand attention. The Divine inspiration of the Bible, as well as all modern analogous phenomena, may be considered of a special rather than a general character.

When a series of connected ideas, methodically arranged, and clothed in fitting language, is *injected* into the mind by *impression*, or presented to it in symbolic vision, by a process which is consciously distinct from its own usual operations, then there is evidence of something beyond the mere inhalation of a general atmosphere of thought. The action of *another mind*, a distinct personal entity, is clearly evinced—an *inspiring* mind, which first conceives and arranges the thoughts to be presented and then communicates them to or through the *inspired* mind. In such case, the latter merely receives and transmits to others, and is properly termed a *medium*. Especially is there evidence of the action of *another* mind, when, during the communication, the inspired person is *controlled*, or his senses locked up, by a power and intelligence beyond himself.

Now it is manifest that if one finite mind has the power to control the action of another, or to project its feelings, thoughts and language into another; and if we are surrounded continually by invisible beings of diverse characters, as well as by our fellows in the body, then there may be much of *inspiration* which does not come direct from the infinite mind, or from the Holy Spirit, as the religious world has to a great extent supposed.

The familiar facts of what has been called Mesmerism, Animal Magnetism, Psychology, and Sympathy, have proved that it is possible for one mind, even in the body, to control another, and

to fill it with thoughts and suggestions at will, under certain conditions.

This being true of minds in the body, the same surely, *may* be true of those disembodied; and the demonstrations of modern Spiritualism prove that it *is* true. The Bible itself shows that it was equally so in ancient times as now. There were *false* prophets as well as true; there has always been "Pagan" inspiration as well as Jewish and Christian—the subjects of both being equally moved and controlled by invisible intelligences. As the Rev. Charles Beecher has declared "Scripture never denies to false prophets a supernatural inspiration, nor bases the distinction of *true* and *false* on physiological grounds."

The simple truth, then, in relation to the whole subject appears to be this:—All human minds are susceptible, some to a greater or more conscious extent than others, of influences from other minds that may be in *rapport* or sympathy with them. These influences may come from the direct and purposed action of individual minds, in or out of the body; or from bands or societies of spirits, acting associatively; or from a general sphere of mental activity, perhaps without the conscious participation of any individual mind.

Some persons, possessing a peculiar degree of nervous susceptibility, may be powerfully excited by this inspirational influence, or may be entirely controlled, to the complete overpowering of their natural faculties, by the inspiring mind or minds. When spirits of a low order, possessing little intelligence and little skill to control the physical organism, attempt to exercise this power, for either a bad or a good purpose, it is not strange that they should produce contortions and frantic movements; nor that their inspirations should fail to embody the highest wisdom. Yet contortions and spasmodic action *may* attend the influence of even exalted spirits upon some organisms—resulting from either excess of power, resistance, nervous derangement, or grossness of condition, in the subject.

The latter would seem to have been the case with Saul of old, if we accept the statement that it was the "Spirit of God" which came upon him, causing him to prophesy frantically, and then to strip off his clothing and lie in unconscious nakedness for twenty-four hours. Of a similar character, perhaps, have been the famous "Kentucky jerks," the sudden prostrations of the late "Irish Revival," and other instances where what has proved to be a really salutary and elevating spiritual influence has at first manifested itself in powerful and seemingly ridiculous forms. It would seem more probable, however, that if the Divine Spirit can be said in any sense to participate in such violent and grotesque operations, it is *through the intermediate agency of*

*subordinate spirits* of a grade near the condition of the subjects acted upon. Hence, the frenzy, the forcible control, and seeming folly, are to be attributed to these intermediates; while the substantial good alone is from Him who is "over all, and through all, and in all."

But as the subjects of inspirational influence become more spiritualised—their bodies more refined, their minds more pure and elevated, their spirits more fully in harmony with the Divine Spirit, by the renunciation of self-will, and submission to the Father's will—so do they come in *rappport* with correspondingly higher grades of individualised minds—so purer, more refined and wiser beings can minister immediately to them—so do their whole organisms become permeable to the Divine influence—so do all violent control and spasmodic action cease, and the breath of holy inspiration flows unobstructedly into and through the chambers of the soul, not to overwhelm and obliterate the normal powers, but to quicken, illuminate and exalt them to their highest, noblest action.

This we deem the true philosophy of inspiration. It gives us a *reason* for the phenomenal differences between Pagan, Jewish, and Christian inspiration so far as such differences existed; also for the differences between the lower and higher phases of Christian inspiration as well as of that of our own day.

It shows also why there have been inconsistencies and contradictions in inspiration—why there were Pagan as well as Jewish and Christian inspired men—why there were false prophets as well as true—why the early Christians were cautioned not to "believe every spirit, but to try the spirits whether they be of God"—why they were inspired men in Paul's time "who called Jesus accursed"—why there is Mohammedan inspiration, and Mormon inspiration—why there are Roman Catholic and Protestant, Trinitarian, Unitarian, Universalist, Swedenborgian, Rationalistic, Naturalistic, and even Atheistic inspiration, in our own day. It is simply for the reason that in the great world of spirits there are minds and societies in every conceivable grade of advancement, and hence entertaining every shade of opinion and fantasy that ever found a lodgment in minds similarly advanced on earth, and how many more we pretend not to say. Prophets, seers, pythonesses, dervishes, mediums, &c., are but persons peculiarly susceptible to influences from the world of spirits; and as they have come into *rappport* or sympathetic relations with one or another individual, society, or sphere of spirit life, so have they been inspired with the ideas and doctrines of such individual, society, or sphere—in other words, they have *breathed in* the spiritual atmosphere of that grade of life to which they have risen. And so do we all.

The same law applies to poetic, musical and artistic inspiration in general. All genius is but capacity for inspiration; all men of genius confess that they succeed only as a greater than they works through them. So interlinked is our mental and spiritual life with the life of a universe of intelligences, that none of us can claim absolute originality, or make clear title to a patent right on any high achievement. We do nothing of ourselves alone. Ministering intelligences, rank above rank, form the unbroken chain or channel through which thought and life reach us from the Central Fount of life and thought. As are our desires and capacities, so do we receive.

Inspiration is thus the perpetual answer to *aspiration*. In one or another form, it is the indispensable means of all individual growth, and equally so of all human progress. It is thus the birthright of every soul and the heritage of all ages. That which is adapted to the needs of childhood is unsuited to the requirements of full grown men and women; and that which met the wants of the world's infancy cannot suffice for the dawning age of manhood.

Having shown that the truth of inspired teachings cannot be determined either by phenomenal signs, by the claims of the inspiring intelligence, or by accompanying miracles we proceed to indicate where the true test is to be found.

There remains to us simply the *intrinsic character, qualities, and tendencies* of the inspired communications themselves,—to which we must apply *our intellectual and moral perceptions and our spiritual intuitions*. In other words, the totality of truth-determining powers with which God has individually endowed us, and which are in a sense His representatives in us, must be brought to bear honestly and reverently upon all teachings purporting to be God-inspired. We are shut up to this—there is no possible escape from it, except by rushing into the arms of a blind, external authority, where all manhood and individuality are basely surrendered, and our noblest powers denied their proper exercise. This is treason to ourselves; and blasphemy against the indwelling God. We are made with capacities for determining truth for ourselves, and have *no right* to surrender the work implicitly into the hands of others, either in this world or any other.

We are so constituted that all truth is authoritative to us, when perceived as truth. The mere affirmation of any being *outside* of ourselves cannot make this *perception* in us. It comes of growth, experience, and enlightenment by influx to our own interiors. Whatever commends itself to our individual perceptions and judgment as true, useful and good,—calculated to elevate and ennoble man, making him more godlike in character and action,—we *must* call Divine, and attribute to the great Fount of

Truth and Good, through whatever channel it may come to us. Whatever does not bear this stamp to us, lacks the image and superscription of Divinity, and cannot be accepted, whatever *external* claims it may bear.

This, to us, is the grand test of all inspired teachings,—the final standard to which they must be brought.

“But,” says one, “our perceptions are imperfect, our judgments fallible and liable to be warped by inclination; hence we are liable to mistake error for truth, and truth for error. It is not safe for us to be left to ourselves in matters of such transcendent importance.”

Be it so: yet has it not been equally true of men in all past ages—even of those to whom we would look for authority? All inspired truth in the past has been communicated to the world through human instrumentalities, and preserved through human agencies. This has rendered it *liable* to vitiation. Those to whom it has *first* come, having no previously written standard with which to compare it, have been of necessity compelled to judge for themselves. Why should their judgment be considered infallible, more than our own? Were the semi-barbarous Hebrews whom Moses led out of Egyptian slavery any better qualified to judge of the value and source of *his* inspirations than are we? Were the first receivers of Christianity, educated as they had been in Jewish ritualism and Pagan superstition, more competent to estimate the teachings of Jesus and the writings of Paul than any other people can ever be? Yet they were called upon to “judge of themselves what was right,”—to “prove all things and hold fast that which is good.” They doubtless did the best they could with the light they had; but does that absolve us from the responsibility of doing the same for ourselves, or make their decision any more binding upon us than ours will be on coming generations? Not one whit.

We cannot, then, rid ourselves of the responsibility of distinguishing for ourselves between truth and error, if we would. Weak, timid, and indolent minds may seek to throw it upon the Church or the Fathers, upon Paul or Jesus, Isaiah or Moses, ancient spirits or modern spirits; but they do so at their own peril. Every man must in the end bear his own burden. All faith built on external authority, and not grounded in internal perception and experience, will sooner or later prove worthless to the soul, and be swept away like the house built on the sand. If the Bible, or any part of it, contains Divine and unalterable truth, (which the writer most fully believes,) we should *know* it for ourselves, and not *believe* it, either on its own claims or the say-so of anybody.

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## Notices of Books.

*The Macrocosm and Microcosm; or, the Universe Without, and the Universe Within. Being an unfolding of the Plan of Creation, and the Correspondence of Truths, both in the World of Sense and the World of Soul. In Two Parts, by WILLIAM FISHBOUGH. Part I.: the Macrocosm; or, the Universe Without. New York, Fowler and Wells; London, Caudwell, Strand. Price, 4s. 6d.*

It will be seen from the title-page of this work, that its subject is a most vast and comprehensive one. In its preface, the author avows that its object is "to draw the bold outlines of a comprehensive primordial philosophy, and to contribute, so far as possible, to the establishment of a system of thought, in which all truths may be viewed in their serial, orderly, and mutually explanatory relations from generals to particulars." Adequately to review a work of this scope, would evidently require a larger space than we can give, and a more thorough and encyclopædic knowledge than we can make any pretension to. We would only caution the reader against confounding it with those empirical works on Universal Philosophy which have done so much to bring inquiries of this kind into contempt. Whether the reader agrees with its conclusions or not he can hardly fail in studying it attentively to profit by its clear synoptical statements of human knowledge in the several departments of the material creation. These are presented, in order "to exhibit a general view of the various series and degrees of systematic creation which compose the aggregate of the outer realm of being, both in their separate and united capacities, together with their relations to each other, and to their common divine cause and governor." Its most distinctive peculiarity appears to be the development of a "septenary and ternary serial law," of which the author finds evidence, not only in all the several kingdoms of nature, but in all their divisions and sub-divisions. All things in nature, in his view, exhibiting a primary trinity, a secondary trinity, and an ultimate. The "seven serial parts or elemental degrees, corresponding to the seven notes of the diatonic scale, and, as composed of such parts, the systems are arranged side by side, or one above another as so many octaves, corresponding to the octaves in music; and, like them, each one serves as a general exponent of all the others, whether on a higher or lower scale."

In working out this view, the author shows great ability in his arrangement and classification of facts. He reasons upon these with ingenuity, modesty and freedom, proceeding from the known to the unknown. Nature and analogy are his guides. He seeks, "by the aid of sense, reason, and intuition, to trace, *analytically*, the descending scale of creation, from exteriors to interiors, from effects to causes, from ultimates to origins." And then he proceeds "to retrace our steps *synthetically*; upward through the successive series and degrees of natural unfolding, and in a general way to discover *how* the system of creation, in its present completed form, came to exist, and also what are the prominent principles of its constitution and government." He invites "particular attention to that feature of the present volume, by which the fundamentals of an elevated theology are preserved and established upon the very basis of those facts in science which have been thought to be rather Pantheistic in their intimations."

The present volume is preliminary to, and designed as a basis for, the second part, which is announced to follow:—*The Microcosm or the Universe Within*. A work which we hope will not be much longer delayed, and to the publication of which we look forward with considerable interest. For its due execution, Mr. Fishbough seems to us peculiarly qualified. He is known to have made psychology a special study for many years; and from the fragmentary essays and papers from his pen, which have appeared in various serials, we are confident that it will be a valuable contribution to psychological science. We observe, with regret, that he has now for some time past withdrawn from that field

periodical literature in which he has so honourably laboured, for the cause can ill spare his advocacy. If, however, this is occasioned by the demands upon his time of the forthcoming volume, we feel sure that, on its appearance, we shall be amply compensated for his present, and, we hope, but temporary withdrawal.

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## Correspondence.

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*To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."*

SIR,—I send you an account of my first spiritual *séance*. As being a novice, and much impressed with what passed, I may, perhaps, shew Spiritualism in a new light; I mean my feelings may be different to those of others. By the kindness of Mr. Home, and the lady at whose house he was stopping, I was admitted to a *séance* at eight o'clock, on Saturday, 13th July. We sat round a common drawing-room table, in the twilight, close to the open window. We were a party of six, viz., Mr. and Mrs. Home, the lady of the house, two strange gentlemen, and myself—three veterans—three novices. In about ten minutes, the table trembled, it did not vibrate, it literally trembled, as if every vein of the wood was a human nerve. Then it rocked, turned, tilted, and rapped. Mr. Home turned up the table cloth, expecting a whirl, but the motion soon ceased. Looking under the table, I saw a massive column and four enormous paws of mahogany, leaving very little vacancy for the conjuror to lie hid in. Presently there was a motion about my feet, then my left knee was tapped three times—a soft, gentle, but decided touch—other rappings occurred. I said to Mr. Home, "We ought to ask whose spirit it is," he replied, "You must ask." I did so; then repeating the alphabet until my knee was tapped, Mr. H. wrote down the letters at which I was stopped. Let me here observe that the reason, I think, why the taps were given on my knee was that the dear spirit knew I could not hear them on the table, being perfectly deaf (but I *was* quite sensible of them when my hands were on the table, the wood conveying the vibration). Thus we proceeded till the word "father" was spelt. My delight was great, here was my beloved father, who had been dead 30 years, come to visit me, as full of love as ever. Mr. H. said, "Ask his name," I did so, and "J" was tapped. I spoilt this by crying out, "Yes, his name is John." Mr. H. then said, "what a noble mind your father has, what a beautiful head." He then described his figure accurately. "How do you know?" I enquired.—"I see him." "Where?"—"Behind your chair." I said, "Father, if you are there, please touch my hand." I put my hand under the table, and immediately something stroked my fore-finger, so soft, so gentle, so delightful; I never felt anything like it. I was not in the least frightened, like Lord Nelson, I never saw *fear*. With my father at hand what was there to be afraid of? It seemed to me the most natural thing in the world. Sometime after, I again put my hand under the table, and was again stroked. Mr. H. said, "Your father's hand is stout." "How do you know?"—"He has just put it on my knee." I understood exactly what that meant. Mr. H. explained to me the next day in what a hearty way it was placed; and it meant "God bless you for what you are doing to my daughter." At one time, Mr. H. had the peculiar look of second sight, his hand contracted and was raised up to my ear, and there for a minute mesmerised me. We thought it was my father's doing. He likewise spoke of my mother, and of my childish troubles, and of a brother. In fact, though he had never heard of me before that day, he knew all my history. He then said, "There are other spirits behind your chair, Elizabeth, Mary, Harriet." The two first puzzled me, but Harriet I knew well; she was my old school-fellow and earliest friend. I begged Mr. H. to describe her. He directly began scribbling, (she was a great writer) and looked very merry. Soon after, my chair was playfully pushed twice—just what Harriet would have done, had she been present in the body; for she was full of fun. Elizabeth, I felt convinced, was an elderly friend of mine. Never having called her by her Christian name, it did not occur to me till the next day. Mary was a puzzle, till the following Monday, when I received a letter informing me she had been some months gone. She had been so kind to me, that I used to call her my second

mother. How pleasant it was to have all my old friends about; they all seemed glad to come and visit me, the very first opportunity they had. The tendency of Spiritualism cannot be bad, or these good people would not sanction it by their presence. These four dear friends of mine were all remarkably religious. And why should it be thought a thing incredible that spirits should re-visit their friends? We *know* that they are not really dead, they have only left the earth-form. Some persons say, "What's it all for? I don't see the use of it." We might say, "What's the use of flowers?" They are very sweet, soothing, and comforting; and the visits of good spirits are not only that, but elevating and ennobling. It lifts us above the little things of this transitory world, and helps us to set our affections on things above. It takes away the fear of death, and we feel that when we die we are really going home. A lady said to me, "If our parents can see us, they would not be happy." I don't know that, for their bliss may be so great that their sorrow and troubles may be only as the dust in the balance, and they may likewise know the reasons and results of what they see, and whatever their love to us may be, it cannot equal the love of our Heavenly Father, who permits affliction. But we cannot tell, all we have to do, is to record facts. The facts of Spiritualism are not new; all history and biography has a sprinkling of them. Now they are coming in a flood, for what cause we shall perhaps soon see. Mr. Home expressed his regret that it had been so poor a *séance*. I thought it *could* not have been more satisfactory; and let me here thank him for his very great kindness to a perfect stranger.

15, Little Blake Street,  
York, July 29th.

Yours very truly,

ANN BRANCKER.

*To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."*

SIR.—It is about twenty-five years ago since I mislaid a bank note, which I had received for a correspondent. I searched for it time after time, but in vain. One afternoon, being at my office, 167, Fleet-street, I sat down with a book: I couldn't read—my mind wandering about the loss. Suddenly, the words sounded in my ear—"Should you not like to find it?" Startled, I exclaimed, "Yes, that I should!" Thinking it fancy, I struggled on with my attempt to read, but with no better success: my eyes wandered off the page, and felt as if drawn to a piece of screwed-up paper at the foot of a pile of waste, under the washing stand, at the left of the fireplace, in front of which I was sitting. As my attention settled upon this, I heard—"If that was it, would not you be glad?" I said as before, "Yes, that I should." But, regarding the voice as the illusion of my fancy, I returned to my book—only, this time, to fall asleep. Presently awakening, I got up to leave. Passing the pile of waste paper on my way to the door, I heard the voice again—"Will you not look at it?" I picked it up. It was the note about which I had been worrying myself, and the finding of it was an unspeakable relief.

At that time, spiritual communications were not talked of; but even then, there was an inkling in my mind that this might possibly be one, and my present knowledge of Spiritualism confirms the supposition. I believe now, that the good spirit of my mother, who left this earth when I was very young, has operated upon my mind for good in very many instances.

Thirty years ago I wrote some stanzas, headed, "Is it well with thee?" and had them printed for distribution. A parcel of these had been laid aside, and long forgotten. I found this parcel among some old papers the other day, and took it to a circle at which I am privileged to attend. I presented a copy to each friend present, the stanzas being of a religious character. (I take the opportunity of enclosing one.) Upon the circle being formed, and after prayer, the spirits present communicated, through the medium (Madam Besson), with the majority of those in the room, about twenty, and coming to me, nearly the last, after greeting me affectionately, the spirit expressed pleasure at the improvement of my health. I asked, "To whom am I indebted for these affectionate regards?" To this she replied, "You do not know me. I am your mother." Then, taking from her bosom my stanzas, she continued, "Ah, you know that! It was I who dictated that to your mind. I was with you then—have been always with you—and shall continue to be so. May God bless you!"

May 20, 1861.

R. G. IBETT.



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The open book contains 200 words from the 14<sup>th</sup> Chap. of the Gospel of St. John "Let not your heart be troubled, &c." down to the second line of the 10<sup>th</sup> verse "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, &c."

The words are apparently written with a lead pencil.



Executed by the Spirits in 11 Seconds,  
through the Mediumship of Mrs E. J. French,  
New York, April, 25<sup>th</sup> 1861.

in the presence of  
Benj<sup>m</sup> Coleman, J. Gurnea  
and several others

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RE: REVENUE (C-1, 1)

[illegible]

*The open book contains 200 words from the 14<sup>th</sup> Chap. of the Gospel  
of St. John "Let not your heart be troubled, &c." down to the second  
verse "I will come and sit down with you."*

*It was in about 1844 written by a spirit.*



*Exposed by the Spirits in 11 seconds,  
with the Mediumship of Mrs E. J. Birch,  
4, April 2nd 1861.*

*Printed by  
...*